

DisabilityNOW

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Kids gain from mums' milking

Children from better off families get special education help more easily because parents are abusing the system, a Scottish researcher has found.

And Tommy MacKay from Strathclyde University said the help children get does not always reflect need.

Of 50 educational psychologists he questioned throughout the UK as part of a study, 40 had experience of people using influence to gain resources.

"People who have connections or those parents who shout loudest tend to get the resources," he said. "These are not necessarily the people in the greatest need. In fact the



MacKay: real need not reflected

people in greatest need often have the double problem of disability and low social status."

In one authority with limited special equipment, the most expensive item was allocated to a boy who had not met the normal criteria or joined the waiting list, but was the son of the assistant director of education.

Mr MacKay, a psychology lecturer, has also looked at records of need in 2,367 Scottish Primary Schools. He claims they too are skewed in favour of the better off.

"Given that need including disability is disproportionately represented in lower social groupings you would expect a significant skewing of these records in that direction," he said, "but there is not."

John Wright, administrator at the Independent Panel for Special Education Advice, which handles 3,500 cases each year, said: "Education authorities will deprive anyone of their entitlement if that helps meet the budget. But they may believe they can get away with depriving working class families more easily."

Meanwhile, the Government has set aside £11m in capital allocations to make over 1,100 mainstream schools across the country more accessible for children with disabilities.

Projects to be funded include not just improving physical access but also setting up a base to help children return to school after a sudden or temporary disability.

Schools minister Estelle Morris said the £11m was a hike up from the £4m promised by the previous Government.

Staff to sign up to codes

All social care staff and their employers will have to sign up to codes of practice, the Government has announced.

The codes will be developed by a General Social Care Council, proposed in a Social Services White Paper to be published in the summer.

Announcing the move, Health Minister Paul Boateng said "The first job of the council should be to draw up enforceable codes of conduct and practice for all staff wherever they work and whatever their job."

The council will also advise on the introduction of registers of social care staff.

The Government has also put out to consultation a Care Charter for elderly and disabled people. This tells local

authorities which services they should publish standards for.

But Francine Bates, deputy chief executive of Carers National Association, said: "We want the Charter to specify clearly what people are entitled to as well."



Boateng: code will be compiled

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Focus on youth is needed

Young disabled people may lose out because their needs are only being considered as an "afterthought" by the Royal Commission on Long Term Care for the Elderly, campaigners have claimed.

The commission will publish a report later this year, but the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG) is worried that their needs will not be properly considered.

The VODG, which includes organisations such as Scope, Mencap and Leonard Cheshire, is calling on the commission to recognise the difference between the needs of elderly and young disabled people.

It says resources must be available to allow those who can work to work, and claims an extra 5,000 supported residential places are needed every year for the next five years. National standards of provision are also needed, it says.

A commission spokesman said: "We are taking the needs of younger disabled people very seriously indeed. We find it an odd accusation for this group to have made."

DisabilityNOW

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TYPESETTING/PRINTING

Voluntary Sector Services, Centurion Press Ltd, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, tel: (01923) 891000

DISTRIBUTION

MMC, Octagon House, White Hart Meadows, Ripley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6HR
 ISSN 0958-4676

The views expressed in *Disability Now* are not necessarily those of Scope.



Pilot areas named

Disabled people in six trial areas will be the first to take part in new measures to help those on long-term disability benefits into work.

Starting in October people in the pilot areas on Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance currently classed as incapable of work will take part in the schemes.

The areas are Lanarkshire, Clyde Valley and Coatbridge, the eastern South Wales valleys, Sandwell, Bolton, Central Sussex, and Bristol East and Bath. Six further pilot areas will be set up in 1999 and the Government will consider implementing the scheme nationally from April 2000.

Personal advisors will offer them employability assessments

and agree individual action plans. The personal advisors will also help employers to retain disabled staff. The Government said people would not be forced to take part.

The scheme is being funded with £5m from the £195m set aside for disabled people under the Government's New Deal.

A range of further pilot measures will include allowing people to try work and remain on benefit and a £50 weekly payment in the first six months for those taking part-time work.

Employment and Education Secretary David Blunkett said: "There are over a million people with disabilities or long-term illnesses who want to work but the benefits system has put barriers in their way."



Blunkett: removing barriers

Steve Davis, education, training and employment officer at the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, said: "We welcome many of these measures, and the fact that using the advisors is voluntary, but there are concerns over the quality of the advisors."

Green paper almost there

The long-awaited green paper on welfare reform has received a warm but guarded reaction from disability organisations.

The paper brought renewed optimism by confirming that disability living allowance (DLA) and attendance allowance (AA) will not be means-tested and will remain centrally distributed.

The paper, spearheaded by Social Security Minister Frank Field, extends the period of time for disabled people on incapacity benefit (IB) to try

out new work opportunities without losing benefit, spells out reforms of IB, and commits the Government to implementing the rest of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Duleep Allirajah, welfare rights officer for Action for Blind People, said: "The Government wants an assessment that recognises that people may be partially capable of working. The danger is that someone assessed as 'partially capable' may only end up with a partial or reduced rate of

benefit, even if they are still out of work."

Scope chief executive Richard Brewster said: "The challenge now will be to ensure that the Government is not just driven by the desire to identify incorrect claims but also by a commitment to improve the takeup of benefit by those that should be entitled to it."

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Tees is just not pleased

Parents of disabled people in Teesside are up in arms about a local authority decision to charge fees for day centres.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council introduced the charges in April but relatives are angry that when they were sent a means-testing form to determine what their charges would be the questions only related to income and not expenditure.

Campaigners claimed one elderly woman, who failed to fill in the form, had two angina attacks after being told to pay £170 a week for her daughter to attend a day centre.

Linda Roberts, 48, of Billingham, is chair of Stockton Borough Learning Disability Interest Group. Her 20-year-old daughter Jill needs 24 hour care and will be charged £24 per week. She said: "Jill is being charged over £1,000 a year. It is scandalous. What guarantee do we have that the money being charged will be spent on safeguarding centres in danger, or improving service?"

A council spokeswoman said: "Some people were advised not to fill in the forms by various lobby groups so we had no means of assessing them. But it certainly was not our intention to cause any distress and we apologise for that."

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Still only 70 frauds found

The Benefits Integrity Project (BIP) has still found only 70 cases of suspected fraud out of the 55,000 people who have been assessed, the Department of Social Security admitted to DN this month.

The two-year BIP was set up to ensure people get the right levels of benefit, and has cost £11.5m a year. It was expected

to make savings on fraud of £7m, £10m and £7m on a staggered basis over three years.

But speaking to the House of Commons Social Security Committee late last month, Ursula Brennan, DSS policy director for disability benefits, admitted that "at present we have made no savings from fraud". This result has prompt-

ed ministers to ask civil servants to look at the way benefit fraud is defined. A new policy statement is expected in June.

Lorna Reith, director of the Disability Alliance, said: "I think the Government has realised that a crackdown on fraud is not appropriate to disability living allowance (DLA). The BIP is not showing up any

real fraud although it is showing some people are getting the wrong levels of benefit."

The committee also heard evidence that Ms Brennan and her two colleagues, Bill Farrell, a project manager for the BIP, and John Lutton, the Benefits Agency director for DLA, had never paid a visit to the homes of disabled people to find out how the assessment procedures were being carried out. The 400 staff involved in the BIP home visits only receive half a day of disability awareness training.

The civil servants assured MPs that self-assessment would remain, despite calls last month from the DLA advisory board, a Government-appointed body, that assessment by GPs should be mandatory (DN, April). Mr Farrell said: "The best people to tell us of their needs are disabled people themselves."

Social Security Minister Baroness Hollis also told MPs that there would be no means-testing on the DLA.

But she did not rule out the possibility of taxing the benefit, saying it was "a separate subject for the Chancellor"

She made a commitment to consult with disability groups on any changes to DLA.

Campaigners defend MP



Begg: the rise, she says, is "what all disabled people should have".

Disability groups have defended MP Anne Begg's £20,000 rise in allowances, as they say it highlights the need for disabled people to have extra resources.

Ms Begg, who is a wheelchair user, can now claim a third

more than the normal office cost allowance of £47,569 a year and a third more than the additional costs allowance of £12,287 for a London home.

The rise has been criticised in the media, particularly because

the Benefits Integrity Project is still continuing.

But Begg says the rise is in line with Government policy because it helps her do her job.

"Disabled people should be encouraged to work," she told DN. "Part of that encouragement is to make sure the resources are available to allow us to do the job. What I get is what I believe that all disabled people should have."

Disability groups backed her. Bob Benson, director of Disability Scotland said: "The remarks in the press are petty. Anne Begg is concerned that reasonable adjustments are made to help more disabled people into work."

In brief

Sussex looks at need

The National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASSEN) has set up another branch in West Sussex. The branch, like the other 60 across the UK, will work with parents and teachers to discuss issues including the Government's Green Paper on special educational provision. Contact NASSEN on tel: (01827) 311500.

A break for carers

Over £25,000 has been set aside to fund a new scheme to help carers. The Royal British Legion Women's Section is using the money to pay for short-term or emergency respite care breaks. Anyone with a connection to ex-service men and women is eligible to apply on tel: 0181-547 3555.

Views on Hampshire

Hampshire County Council has put together a draft document looking into the transport needs of its elderly and disabled population. The document makes 100 recommendations on 'low-floor' and Dial-a-Ride buses and other services. Ring (01962) 847042 for details.

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Red tape fails to help savers

Learning disabled people and people who are mentally incapacitated could continue to lose out because of the way the Government handles their money, investors have claimed.

A row erupted after James Capel Investment Management was sacked by the Public Trust Office, (PTO), part of the Lord Chancellors Office, after alleged poor performance.

The PTO employs two stockbrokers to look after funds totalling £350 million, for mentally incapacitated people. The funds are placed with the PTO by the Court of Protection.

A replacement for JCIM has already been appointed, but JCIM said one problem had been that it had to give written advice on each proposed investment. "The chances are that other companies may have the same problem," a spokeswoman said.

And Nicholas Grazebrook, director of the Association of

Solicitor Investment Managers, (ASIM), accused the PTO of providing insufficient incentives for fund managers by keeping costs too low.

Rather than paying a standard management fee the PTO says it tries to save money by paying commission. But Grazebrook said this meant ASIM members who charged fees were being prevented from continuing to work with clients who became mentally incapacitated.

"If you drive down the costs a fund manager trying to make a profit may devote minimum resources to it," he said. "We speak as an organisation which would like some of this business and we believe it is in the patient's interests that we should have that opportunity."

But a PTO spokesman said a management fee would cost far more without necessarily a better return. The PTO had cut back on paper work in 75 per cent of cases, he said.

Watchdog's lead is too lax

The Charity Commission is too complacent about the risk of fraud, MPs have warned.

The Commission acts as a watchdog over the country's 184,000 registered charities – including at least 6,500 groups for the disabled – which have combined assets of £35 billion.

But in a new report the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts says it is concerned over the failure of one-third of charities to produce annual accounts. It says the Commission has no adequate ways of dealing with charities which fails to cooperate over requests for this information.

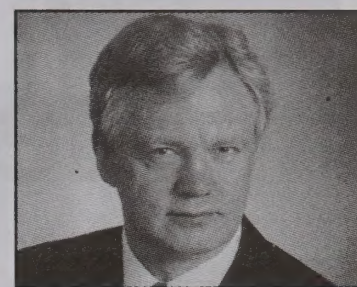
The Commission was given stronger regulatory powers in 1993, but the MPs claim it is not fully using them. Only eight per cent of commission staff run investigative work.

To rectify the situation, the Committee is calling on the Commission to obtain all accounts for charities with an annual above £10,000.

Committee chairman, Conservative MP David Davis, said: "The Commission views abuse as a minor problem in

the sector and they might be right. But they have failed to collect evidence to prove it."

The Commission said the report was based on a study carried out two years ago. It said it has now introduced a new strategy which includes keeping records of charities failing to provide accounts.



Davis: more evidence is needed

Medics set up drug group

The British Medical Association (BMA) wants to set up a research group to speed up studies into the effects of cannabis-based products.

Head of Science and Ethics at the BMA Dr Vivienne Nathanson told DN: "We want high quality research. We think this group will encourage people to put forward good projects and help liaise with the Home Office to minimise delay in approving new rules."

The exact logistics will be discussed after the BMA has given evidence to the House of Lords committee on cannabis.

Meanwhile, a man who gave cannabis to his wife to relieve the symptoms of multiple sclerosis (MS) was cleared of three out of four drug related charges. Alan Blythe, 52, from Runcorn in Cheshire, pleaded guilty only to growing the drug and giving it to his wife. He was found not guilty of cultivating, cultivating with intent to supply and supplying the drug but was convicted of possession and fined £100.

After the case Mr Blythe said he would continue to supply cannabis to his wife. MP Paul Flynn, a long-time campaigner for cannabis to be legalised, said: "There has been a noticeable change in public opinion. People do seem to be understanding the arguments now."



Wheeling ahead: disabled people lead the Independent on Sunday's demonstration in March calling for cannabis to be legalised.

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Campbell's in the soup

A hearing impaired man has won damages under the Disability Discrimination Act after he was turned down for a job by the leading soup manufacturer Campbells.

But the victory came too late to prevent him from losing his house as he could not afford to go on paying the mortgage.

Barry Estabrook from Hunstanton in Norfolk won £11,000 for financial loss as well as £2,500 damages for hurt feelings at an industrial tribunal in Norwich.

Discrimination and employment law consultant Victoria Daines, who represented Mr Estabrook, said the company had admitted liability.

"This shows that people who feel they have been discriminated against should take claims," she said.

Mr Estabrook said he had been forced to take a hearing test but was not allowed to use his hearing aid. He was then told he had been turned down for the job. He also claimed the company had subsequently re-offered him the job when it became clear he was taking the case to a tribunal.

"Having been happy with the interview and the likelihood of

the position becoming a permanent one after a period of six months, I cannot describe the devastation I felt," he said.

Meanwhile another man has reached an out-of-court settlement with Fenland District Council after he lost his job following a car accident in which he had injured his back.

Gerry Warren had worked as an environmental health officer with the council since 1993 but was sacked last year.

In a statement agreed between the two parties after the settlement the council said: "Fenland District Council is happy to record that the termination of Mr Warren's employment was in no way a reflection of his intrinsic abilities as an environmental health officer, nor as a result of any lack of any effort on Mr Warren's part during his trial period."

The statement went on to say that a jobshare had been considered inappropriate. It said Mr Warren had told the council about the possibility of contacting placement, assessment and counselling teams, which can give advice and assistance to disabled employees.

But the council never contacted the local team

Homes ignore kids

Social workers often ignore the views of children with speech problems, a study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation reveals.

The research project, *Still Missing?*, by Dr Jenny Morris, found that many social services staff did not bother to find out the opinions of children with communication difficulties who spent time away from home.

Many did not realise that the 1989 Children Act, which places a duty on service providers to find out the wishes of those in their care, applied to these children as well.

The team questioned three local authorities about their services for disabled children who spent time in respite care services. Dr Morris said: "On many occasions, no attempt had been made to find out the child's view and the section



Children with speech difficulties need to be heard, says the report

labelled 'child's view' was left blank. This is a denial of human rights. It is appalling."

Director of the Council for Disabled Children Philippa Russell said: "The important message is that we need to be absolutely certain that anyone who provides services for dis-

abled children must take on board the wishes of those children. There are serious implications for the safety of some disabled children if they do not."

Still Missing? is available from the Who Cares Trust, tel: 0171-251 3117, price £12.

Commission 'by 2000'

Disabled people are to get a commission to enforce their rights by the end of the century, but ministers insist it will rarely take court action.

Equal Opportunities Minister Alan Howarth said: "We will introduce a bill in the autumn to create a Disability Rights Commission, which will be on the statute book next summer. So we will have a commission for the new millennium."

The full set of recommendations have been completed and

were due to be published as DN went to press.

But Mr Howarth added, "We do not see the commission as having some unduly heavy regulatory tasks to perform. Its role should be to promote better understanding and to conciliate. Only very occasionally will it wish to pursue a case into the courts where there is a key principle in question. But of course from time to time it will be very important for that to be done."

Meeting on flop scheme

The Government has agreed to talks with campaigners after a scheme to let people choose their own wheelchair flopped.

Health Minister Paul Boateng will meet emPOWER, an umbrella group including wheelchair users, on 11 May.

It will be demanding action

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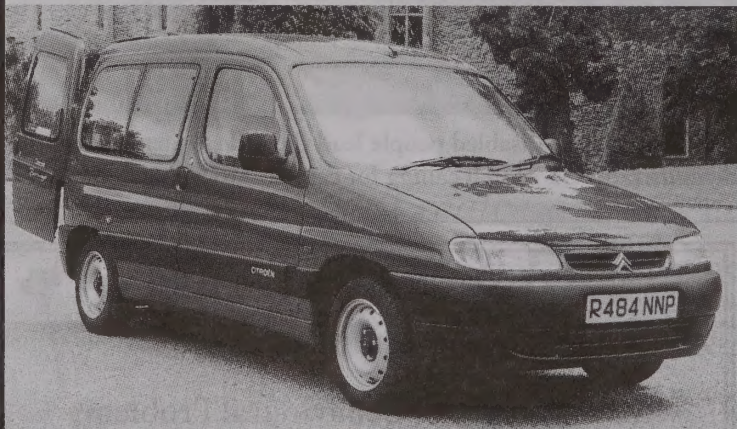


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Shinkwin: wants user input

after health authorities reported that they had spent only £225,000 of the £7 million available for the Wheelchair Voucher Scheme since it was set up in 1996 (DN, April).

Now emPOWER is calling for the Government to ensure wheelchair services are covered by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence proposed in the Health Service White Paper. This would allow user input.

Kevin Shinkwin, secretary to the emPOWER steering group, said: "At the moment the service is fragmented. There is no adequate means of checking that the money is being spent effectively. Inclusion of users on the Institute would help."

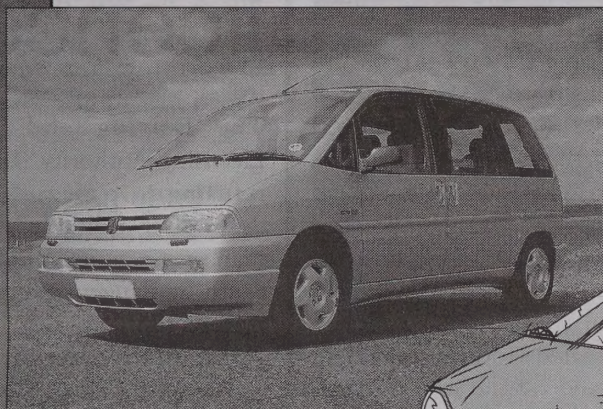
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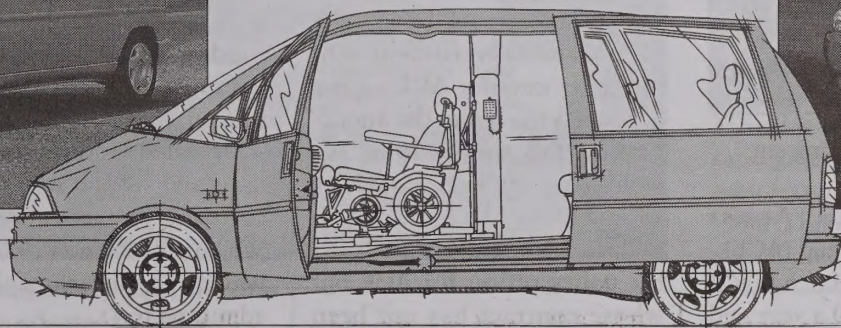
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Guide dogs at bay

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (GDBA) has published the first findings in a thorough review into its future after years of being accused of being a wealthy charity which spends little of its reserves.

The charity has also been criticised for providing its services to a very small client group – 4,600 guide dog owners.

The review is taking into account the views of members, fundraisers, clients and staff. The new document, *Taking a Lead*, summarises findings from the review process and outlines future options. Its

spokesman David Holding told DN: "Our new chief executive Geraldine Peacock inherited an organisation with healthy reserves but an ongoing financial deficit of over £10m a year. This is something we will have to address."

The document says the GDBA will continue to help its core group but will consider ways to expand its services to other people with visual impairments. The charity also wants to update its image.

Dorethy Lamb has owned guide dogs for 32 years. She told DN: "I think the

Association must not get too far away from the people it is meant to be dealing with. GDBA has put a lot of money into other organisations. Sometimes the GDBA doesn't make enough of the fact that it has helped other groups. But it should not forget its original aim – training guide dogs."

A Royal National Institute for the Blind spokesman said: "We are interested to see what changes the GDBA will make as these may have implications for other blind charities."

The GDBA will announce its new policy in September.



Talking sense: shopper Clifford Chance tries one of four parking bays in the Somerfield store in Pontardawe, Wales, which have been installed with tannoys to remind drivers that they are reserved for orange badge holders. The tannoys speak in English and Welsh.

Access groups crumble after cut



Peter Montgomery fears the knock-on effect of the funding cut

Volunteer access groups could go to the wall after the Government slashed the core funding of their central infor-

mation body, the Access Committee for England (ACE).

ACE was told in March that it would lose £170,000 a year and

have to lay off all of its four full time staff (DN, April). Now all 430 local access groups, which lobby for better access to buildings and services, have nowhere to turn for advice.

One group that is affected is the Lincolnshire Access Forum, made up of ten access groups. Group chairman Peter Montgomery told DN: "The saving the Government will make by cutting ACE's core funding is trivial but the knock-on effect is tremendous. We won't have the back up advice we had in the past."

Clare Goodridge, who was the policy officer for ACE but whose contract has not been

renewed, said: "All 430 groups could crumble as a result of this. All these groups are autonomous and very few have financial support. They will now have to concentrate on fundraising to be effective."

She added: "Equal Opportunities Minister Alan Howarth says we can no longer have special arrangements for funding because it would be unfair on other organisations. But our projects fit in clearly with stated Government intentions and we still had both our core and project funding cut. We think there is an agenda which the Government is not admitting to."

Agency firm on licences

The Driving and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) is refusing to review its procedures after a disabled Norfolk man was acquitted of causing death by dangerous driving by reason of insanity.

Immediately after the verdict at Norwich Crown Court Ivor Kemp, whose 60-year-old wife Marlene was knocked down and killed by Reginald Pull, called for an inquiry into why Mr Pull was issued with a driving licence by the DVLA.

The Court heard how Mr Pull's multiple sclerosis, which he has had since 1984, could cause his legs to spasm.

It was claimed it also may have made him unaware that he was not fit to drive.

But a spokeswoman for the DVLA said there would be no new review based on this particular case.

"The onus is really on the individual or a third party on behalf of the individual to let us know if they have a medical condition which will affect their driving," she said.

"But we are constantly reviewing our medical procedures and looking at all medical conditions."

Mrs Kemp died in hospital of head injuries she sustained when Mr Pull lost control of his Ford Fiesta automatic in Norwich and crashed onto a crowded pavement.

Four other pedestrians were injured in the incident in December 1996.

The judge at the trial, Mr Michael Hyam, ordered that Mr Pull should be placed in the care of a psychiatrist.

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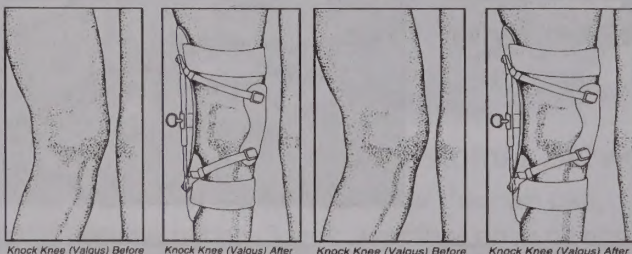


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In brief

Leaders sign on

Opposition leaders Paddy Ashdown and William Hague have helped to put continence care on the political agenda by signing up to the Continence Charter, which sets out national standards on continence care based on clinical need.

At the same time campaigners have launched a newsletter to highlight problems that are affecting continence services. National co-ordinator of the Continence Campaign Simon Hombersley said: "We have support for our campaign from over 70 MPs and we need to keep them informed."

Grants help move out

Scope has received two lottery grants worth nearly £300,000 to help disabled people to move out of residential care services and set up in their own homes. One grant will help 25 disabled people who live in Scope accommodation in Wales to live in the community. The other grant will benefit people using Scope services in Essex.

MS video launched

The *MS Survival Kit*, a video information pack funded by the National Lottery and the MS Society, is now available for anyone who has the condition. The pack combines the experiences of people with MS with advice on how to live with the disease. Telephone Sarah Laws on (01432) 344039.

Two thirds rise in 'sick'

The number of people who say they have a long-term illness or disability has risen by 66 per cent since 1972, a survey shows.

The figure is now 35 per cent when it was 21 per cent in 1972.

The 1996 *General Household Survey*, published by the Office for National Statistics, showed that disability and illness were also related to social class.

Among people in manual households 24 per cent of men said they had a long-standing illness which limited their activities, compared to 17 per cent

in non-manual households. The corresponding figure for women was 25 per cent and 20.

Head researcher Paul Hunter said: "It is difficult for us to say why this increase may have occurred. People may now perceive problems differently."

The number of elderly people was also increasing, he said.

The findings follow another set of figures in the 1996-7 *Family Resource Survey*, which has led the Department of Social Security to raise its estimate of disabled adults living in



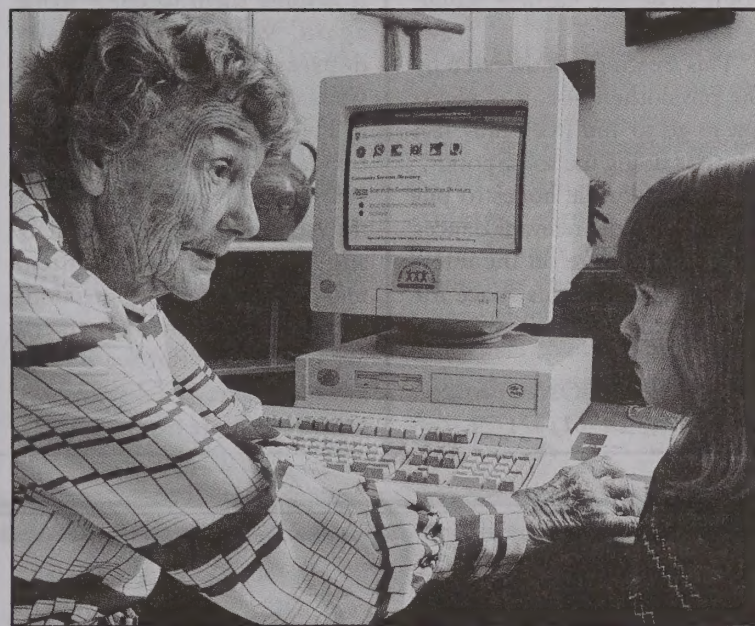
Hunter: elderly on the increase

private households from 5.8 million to 8.6 million.

The figures may lend support to those campaigning to protect disability benefits which are under review.

Kathryn Hindley, a team leader with the Disability Alliance, said: "People have been encouraged by Government and local authorities to take up disability provisions and to think of themselves as disabled, but it does not mean they were not disabled or sick in the first place."

Cookery teacher and opera house praised



The Hantsweb internet site can easily be adapted by anyone

A cookery teacher and the English National Opera (ENO) were among those rewarded for helping visually impaired people in April.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) 'See It Right' awards honour organisations providing information in accessible forms.


The ENO provides navigation details of the auditorium and local area on tape. It shared the award in the Leisure section with the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. This provides a tape giving listings of events with features on musicians.

Phil Thomas, special projects consultant at Bridgewater Hall,

said: "We've put every piece of information that the public get in a taped format. But we've also tried to turn the tapes into a magazine."

Margaret Niven, a cookery teacher at Blackpool Fylde College, won the Unsung Heroine award for recording a cookery book onto tape for her visually impaired students.

Other winners, all of whom had to be nominated, included First Direct Bank, Stowaway Travel, and Hampshire County Council for its Hantsweb web site. This can be adapted to make it easier for those with visual impairment, and is at <http://www.hants.gov.uk>

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27 Sept

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17 Oct

Dancing for bones

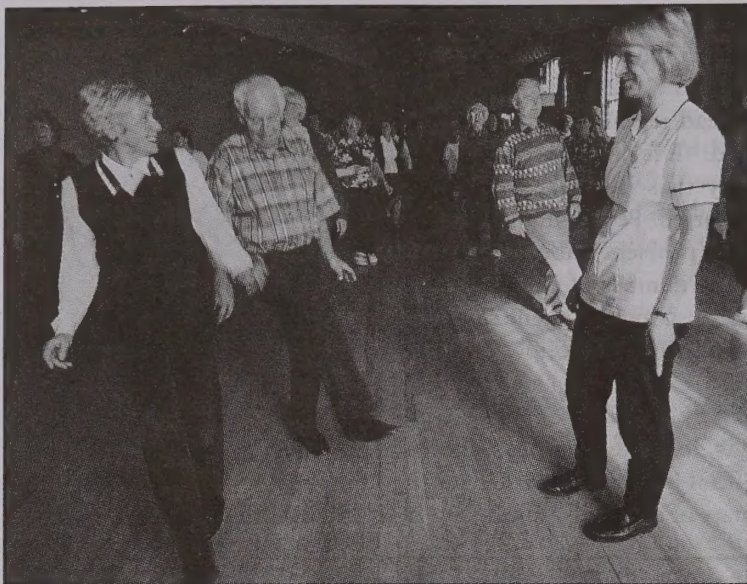
A hospital in Hull has put some fun into preventing the brittle bone disease osteoporosis by encouraging those at risk or already affected by the disease to line dance.

Professor David Purdie, head of clinical research at the centre for metabolic bone disease at the Hull Royal Infirmary, has introduced a treatment using two dances specially choreographed to exercise the muscles around the bones of the spine and the hips.

These are particularly vulnerable to attack from the disease, which affects one in three women and one in 12 men over the age of 50.

The dances are called the vertebral two-step, for people at risk of osteoporosis, and the more gentle Osprey for older people who already have it. Purdie stressed that they are just part of the overall range of treatments, such as hormone replacement therapy, used to prevent the disease.

"After asking our patients questions about their physical activity, I began to hear again and again that they were doing line dancing for fun," he said.



Line dancing is good physical exercise, so is good for the bones too
UNP/THERAPY WEEKLY

"Physical exercise is essential for the health of bones because when muscles pull on bone it helps to prevent the bone from losing minerals.

"Because line dancing is popular among a group of the population which is at risk of osteoporosis it seemed to be sensible to use it."

Joyce Rawding, chair of the local branch of the National Osteoporosis Society, said: "People with osteoporosis are looking for suitable exercises

and finding ones which are not going to do you harm is actually a problem.

"This treatment is overseen by the physiotherapist, it is pleasant to go to and I certainly feel that it is doing me some good."

Professor Purdie hopes to put the steps for the relevant dances on a special page on the internet soon. Watch this space for more details.

The National Osteoporosis Society, tel: (01761) 471771

Humble bee is blessed

An order of nuns claims to be improving the conditions of people with Alzheimer's disease with a substance made by bees.

Bees produce propolis by chewing the buds and bark of poplar and fir trees. They use it to seal off the hive from germs.

Now the Little Sisters of the Poor, an order of nursing nuns with 200 residences around the world, have started using it on people with Alzheimer's.

Sister Carole, a nurse for 20 years, who was the first to use it on residents, said: "Propolis is helping them to enjoy living again. Within weeks totally depressed patients begin to smile again and take an interest in life. Their memory, recognition, and speech all improved."

However a spokesperson for the Alzheimer's Disease Society suggested that the chemical may just be relieving infections which those with Alzheimer's are prone to. "But we do not know for sure," she said. "We would like more research."

In brief

An early massage

Queen Charlotte's Hospital in London is researching how massaging premature babies can reduce the chance of mental health problems in later life.

Gentle massage reduces levels of cortisol, a stress hormone, which in high concentrations can kill off brain cells.

Sleeping by the book

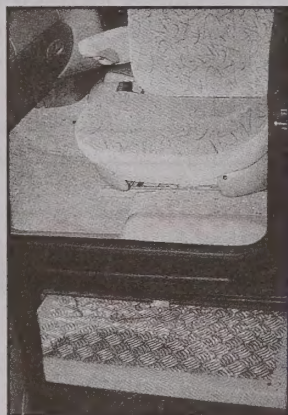
The mental health charity Mind has produced a guide *How to Cope with Sleep Problems*, aimed both at people with severe anxiety and stress problems and those with more general sleeping problems.

Price: £1, tel: 0181-519 2122

Diabetes virus claim

A London-based researcher believes a virus may cause childhood diabetes, leading to hopes that a vaccine could combat the condition.

Dr Mark Peakman from Kings College is studying a virus which causes diabetes in mice. Diabetes causes the body to attack its own insulin-producing cells. Dr Peakman is studying whether the body mistakes its own cells for the virus.



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Acting up for access

Peter Baber meets theatre access officer Janet Beech-McKoy

If your idea of going to the theatre is being crammed into an out of date building, with

no thought given for disabled people, you are behind the times. The Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, for example, has been producing signed performances since 1991. So has the Swan Theatre next door. All this is part of a special programme for people with disabilities run by

the Royal Shakespeare Company, which operates both theatres, and the Other Place next door. The RSC has just appointed Janet Beech-McKoy as a part-time access officer to increase awareness of this. Janet appears to be the first dedicated access officer at a national theatre company and

is certainly the first disabled one. Janet was born hearing impaired. She uses two languages, English and British Sign Language, and as such feels she belongs to two cultures. Gaining a degree has allowed her to integrate into the hearing community, something not always available to hearing

impaired people. And it was helpful that one of her passions is signed theatre performance. She stresses that her first aim is to get feedback from people of all disabilities about how the theatre could be improved. She says: "I would like people with disabilities to contact me and let me know what they need. We must improve communication between the theatre and the community." Since she was appointed a month ago, the RSC has already



decided to extend its signed performances to Saturday afternoon matinées in the Swan, as well as the current performances which tend to be on weekday evenings. The company's very impressive signers, she says, will make Shakespeare really come alive. "After all," she says, "hearing people have enjoyed theatre for many years, so why shouldn't disabled people?" While awareness raising among the public is important in her work, environmental improvements are needed too. Janet admits there may be more of a problem here. "The main theatres here were built in the 1930s," she says, "so they are more difficult to arrange for wheelchair access. The Other Place is more accessible, and the Barbican (where the RSC has an annual six-month residence) is probably the best. It has lifts, and was designed with wheelchair users in mind." It's a softly, softly approach that also applies to raising awareness behind the scenes. While some theatres in London have disabled actors, she thinks it will be a long time before we see disabled actors at Stratford – if we ever do. "Such projects involve a lot of hard work. I'm not sure about having that in this theatre. You need more staff to help them after all," she says. Thus far it seems, and no further. Then again, Janet has not set out to change the acting world anyway. She has an awareness raising background, not a thespian one, spending the last seven years as a student services officer at the City Lit adult education centre in London. While there, she persuaded the college to be more receptive to disabled people. Let's hope she can bring the same ideas to theatre.



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Bars to access



Signing the way: Prison officers Gould and McCaighy of HMP Brixton, are improving deaf awareness in the Prison Service

What is life like for disabled people under lock and key? In the first of a two-part series, Lisa Hitchen investigates.

The Prison Service claims it has been carrying out a thorough review of its provision for disabled people since the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) came into force in December 1995.

Manager of the Prison Service's disability unit, Jackie Ross, told *DN*: "A questionnaire survey was carried out in English and Welsh prisons last year, which found that there were 40 profoundly deaf people, 15 blind people and 164 people with severe mobility problems out of a total prison population of 58,000.

"The Service is now doing more research so it can implement the future provisions of the DDA. These include providing extra services by the year 1999, and removing physical barriers or providing services by other means by 2004. We will be in a position to say how changes will be made once this is completed in around six months time."

The Prison Service says it is meeting the provisions of the Act which are already enforceable, relating to goods, facilities and services. Yet many prison staff would admit there is still a long way to go before prisons are able to fully cater for the needs of a changing population of disabled inmates.

John Riddle, former probation officer at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Frankland, Durham, was so concerned over a lack of provision for disabled prisoners that he decided to carry out his own research (*Prison Report*, 1997).

Mr Riddle randomly selected 12 British prisons and sent out questionnaires asking each about their services and facilities for inmates with special needs. Only five replied. He wrote: "Wormwood Scrubs had only four disabled prisoners, but managed to involve them in all areas of activity. In contrast, Birmingham, with



The Roundhouse, HMP Brixton

twice as many prisoners with special needs as Wormwood Scrubs, excluded them from all activities except socialising."

This contrast may reflect the national picture. Despite the DDA, provision still depends

on the willingness of staff, the availability of resources and the accessibility of the individual prison. This does not mean that individual needs are always overlooked. In some prisons, there is evidence that staff work hard to ensure the prison meets the needs of disabled individuals.

Two officers at HMP Brixton, Caye Gould and Daz McCaighy, decided to learn British Sign Language (BSL) two years ago so they could communicate with Barry, a prisoner who went deaf before he could talk.

There are a number of other local initiatives up and down the country involving prison staff learning sign language. But these officers are pioneers because they have put together a deaf awareness course to be used by staff working with deaf people in custody.

They have also pushed for a conference on deaf issues which will be held at the prison in August, where their work will be discussed with senior representatives from the Prison Service and the British Deaf Association.

Officer McCaighy, said: "Our deputy governor, Peter Hanaway, agreed to fund our BSL training and gave us the idea to set up the course. We have been lucky to have that level of commitment by senior management to push this through."

Officer Gould, added: "There has been a lot of ad hoc training in many prisons, but we want decisions to be made nationally through this conference and our course to be taken up by others."

This is something which would benefit people like Barry, who told *DN* what it was like to be the sole deaf inmate in a jail of 650 men.

He said: "I was attacked at my last jail which is why I was transferred. I also get

bullied here sometimes. Communication is useless with other inmates because they don't understand me. I get very frustrated. None of the other inmates have learnt to sign, they are just not interested. It is better here because two of the officers have learnt signing but they are not always on duty. Because of this I have to write everything down."

Officer McCaighy feels Barry has a responsibility to help himself by teaching others to sign. But he said: "Teasing will be less of a problem if prisoners see staff communicating with



Barry, a deaf inmate at Brixton

Barry in sign language. It will make them less likely to victimise him."

Governor Peter Winkley, of HMP Eastwood Park in Bristol, a two-year old training prison for women, (where prisoners receive job training and education), says the prison only has one female inmate who uses a wheelchair.

He said: "This offender is the only person we have had in the prison whose disability has

caused any difficulties, and those have been fairly minimal. This prison is very modern with only two floors. Plus, all activities involving this woman have taken place on the ground floor."

Deputy Governor O'Gorman of Shepton Mallet, a training prison for men in Somerset, told a different story: "We have so many steps and stairs in this Victorian jail that it would be impossible to look after a disabled prisoner here."

If some prisons are far from suitable for disabled inmates, what is the situation like for employees? The Prison Service currently employs 94 people with physical or sensory disabilities.

One of these is Roger Serle, the governor's secretary at HMP Holloway, who is blind. He has been working in prisons for the last nine years. "I have no complaints about the way I have been treated either here or at Bristol Prison where I worked before. I still know of very few disabled people employed in the Service but I think there has been a noticeable improvement in disability awareness in the last 20 years.

"We have only one inmate who uses a wheelchair here. She does not have access to all parts of the prison but I know that strenuous efforts were made for her to use the pool and the gym. I know the staff try hard to treat everyone as fairly as possible."

Next month: DN investigates mental health problems in prisons.

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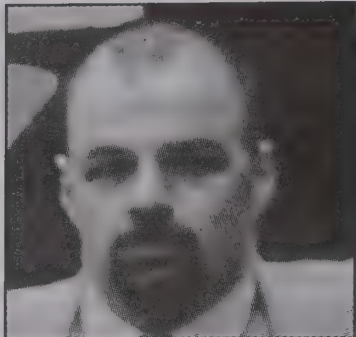
DN



Richard Wood



Pauline Thompson



David Ruebain



Hilda Davies



Ginny Jenkins

Hard Labour or soft touch?

What has Labour done for disabled people and carers? Lisa Hitchen finds out.

Richard Wood, chief executive of the British Council of Disabled People, said: "The dialogue between ourselves and the Government on a number of issues affecting disabled people has made a real change because it rarely happened in the past. Another positive measure is Social Security Minister Frank Field's Green Paper on welfare reform which, if fully implemented, could be a significant move forward."

But he was still worried about the Benefits Integrity Project (BIP) which re-assesses peoples' entitlement to Disability Living Allowance. He added: "We still do not have a timetable for full civil rights legislation."

Pauline Thompson, director of the Disablement Income Group, said: "I think Labour was blown off course this winter by speculation about dramatic changes to benefits

which aren't going to materialise now and by the worst effects of the BIP.

"Frank Field's Green Paper contains some reassurances that help us to see where the Government is going and indicates it wants to consult before making major changes. We had an awful time but now I am more hopeful."

Devon Marston, an assistant occupational therapist working in mental health services at Springfield Hospital, Tooting, said: "It seems that the Government is now beginning to catch up and tidy up the mess that the country has been in for the last decade. I know it is a long process but I am glad to see Junior Health Minister, Paul Boateng telling the disability and mental health groups that they need to work together to make a fair and just society.

"I can see all this through

the way the Government is trying to stamp out racism in the community, the work place and the home. This will benefit disabled people from ethnic groups."

David Ruebain, a disabled solicitor said: "The incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic legislation is positive. Parts of the Government's Green Paper on special educational needs (SEN) which promotes greater rights to inclusion for disabled children are also good.

"Bad things include the complete cock-up by the Government over welfare benefits and other bits of the Green Paper on SEN which seem to suggest a watering down of disabled children's legal rights." He was also disappointed at the Government's refusal to overturn the Gloucestershire ruling which allows councils to deny care to disabled people if funds are short.

were caring for had their benefit cut. We are now clearer about what is being proposed and are less worried, though there is still a question over what the Department of Social Security (DSS) will do with invalid care allowance."

Dougie Herd, a disability training consultant in Scotland, said he felt there had been more good news than bad.

"I have always voted Labour and I am very pleased that we now have a Scottish Parliament and that we will have a Disability Rights Commission.

"I am not happy about the degree of compulsion under the New Deal for young disabled people on Jobseekers Allowance or the maintenance of Conservative spending limits on local authorities. I also think Labour should abandon the slogan 'cool Britannia'."

Ginny Jenkins, director of Action on Elder Abuse, claimed that the jury was still out on whether Labour had done a good job.

"Paul Boateng has made a lot of positive statements which should help to prevent abuse. We hope these will be turned into practice.

"We are concerned about the apparent lack of enthusiasm to progress with the Lord Chancellor's Green Paper on mental incapacity because that will be so vital to prevent abuse. It would mean vulnerable adults would be able to take more decisions over their own

lives. It would help prevent a lot of financial abuse. It would also make sure that the Court of Protection which is often responsible for the affairs of older people, is an accessible and appropriate court. Because it has adult protection legislation in it, it would actually help people who suspect abuse to do something about it."

Hilda Davies, the parent of a disabled person, said we should not judge Labour too quickly.

"I was always a political activist so I know that implementing the most major review of the benefits system in 50 years takes more than 12 months.

"In looking at benefits for disabled people and their carers, the spending review also has to take into account issues of discrimination and the need to change the attitudes of employers and the public to those disabled people who would like to work. We've been told that the Government intends to provide sick and disabled members of society with the financial and social support they need to live with independence and dignity in society.

"The review is ongoing so speculation is premature. Beveridge's plan took over 2 years to implement. Labour is putting in £195 million from the windfall tax as a beginning, but you can't expect miracles in a year."

Rachel Sandford, has had ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome) for six years. As a result, she has had to miss out on much of her education.

She said: "I was thrilled when Labour got in but I must say I have been disillusioned since.

"I am currently having to fill in another 30-page document for re-assessment of DLA under the BIP. It was a struggle to get the money in the first place and then you hear all those stories of people losing it. It is not as if disabled people enjoy claiming benefits, we claim because we have to.

"You get angry when the DSS tell you yet again that they have lost your form and they will have to send another doctor round to assess you, who may be abusive and not accept your condition."

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Francine Bates, deputy chief executive of the Carers National Association, said carers shared the concerns of disabled people over the BIP.

"I think there was a lot of anxiety about disability benefits. A lot of people didn't make the link with carers and how their benefits would be affected, but carers did. We got many calls from people who felt their invalid care allowance would be cut if the person they

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Gaining from training



Pushing for a job: Darren Wells hopes to get work after training

directly employed qualify for help from the Government's job assistance scheme Access to Work, which can provide equipment. Training providers can make arrangements for other trainees.

Emma Grace, (left), 19, who has Turner Syndrome, started training in 1996. Having gained NVQ level two in childcare she now works at Mottingham Primary School as a classroom assistant doing an MA.

"I hope to work unsupervised in a nursery on my own," she says. "I like it here, the staff and children are lovely."

Darren Wells, 19, who is visually impaired, is doing pre-NVQ training, and is on placement at Roger Harvey's Garden World in Stevenage.

"I go to college and do a placement. At college we learn Maths, English and Health and Safety. At work I do anything from lifting to making up displays," he says.

Joseph Griffiths, (right), 17, of Bristol, who has dyslexia, has been doing a Modern Apprenticeship in hairdressing since September.

He says: "I'm learning how to cut, perm, colour and set. I'd like to become as good as the top stylists and own some shops."

However those involved professionally in careers advice for disabled youngsters have less rosy views on just how good current training is.

Steve Davis, education, training, and employment officer at the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, is concerned at the way TECs fund training providers. Much of their money is paid on the basis of results.

He says: "The emphasis on results and employment as the outcome of training puts pressure on providers to offer training to those most ready for work, which might discriminate against disabled people."

One disability training consultant who does national work for the Government agrees that funding arrangements mean disabled youngsters are under represented on schemes.

"It is my impression that the careers service do not see the TEC programmes and the

work based route as being a suitable way forward and will preferentially refer a youngster to a college instead," he adds.

While TECs could make provision for disabled people unlikely to gain standard qualifications many think it is too much trouble, he says.

And Barbara Waters, director of Skill, National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, says: "It may be quite proper that young disabled people should go to college for a period of further education."

"But the transition to training from college is not clear enough in many areas. The careers companies and the TECs need to be working closer together. There is not a lot of forward planning on the part of providers. Colleges are now being encouraged to provide more careers support."

"A few TECs have done some excellent work but there is as yet no way of spreading that throughout all TECs."

She is also worried about MAs.

"It could be a very good scheme for people with disabilities because it means you have a structure and get a good shot at a career. But disabled people may complete modules more slowly, so they may be unable to start MAs if it is felt they will not complete them by the age of 25. Our local TEC is adamant that training must be completed by 25 or you would

lose funding," she says.

A Department for Education and Employment, spokesman, says: "We will be considering with TECs what lower level qualifications might be funded through the work based learning route."

"The DfEE encourages TECs to take account of those with special needs."

There is money to support those who might take longer to gain NVQs, he says.

He also denies that disabled youngsters are being steered away from training by careers

advisors.

"Any evidence of such discrimination would be taken very seriously," he says.

Training does not have to end at 25 he says, as it can continue under the TEC funded Training for Work scheme, and, he adds: "Disabled people are under-represented on MAs but we are keen to redress the balance."

Local careers services or Job Centres where Disability Employment Advisors are based can give more advice.

The Benefits Agency Disability phone enquiry line, tel: 0800 882200

Skill, tel: 0171-9789890.



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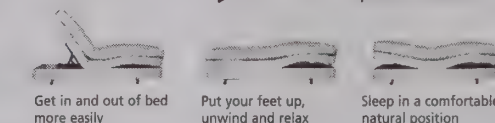
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E-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

No disability to get sympathy

The Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics (ACT) was asked to contact "MS sufferers who are wheelchair bound" to lead the *Independent on Sunday's* (IOS) legalisation of cannabis march last month.

While ACT has no objection to this campaign, we do not wish to give our support, as the IOS is campaigning for general decriminalisation of cannabis, whereas we want medicinal preparations of cannabis to be available on a doctor's prescription for ill and disabled people.

Our request would not mean it is necessary for cannabis to be legal (compare heroin/dimorphine which is widely used medicinally but is still illegal.) Similarly, if cannabis were legalised, we would still be campaigning. We believe seriously ill people should be able to get their medicines from their doctor and not have to provide it themselves.

ACT welcomes the support of *DN* which has taken up the campaign for cannabis on prescription.

I have written to the editor of

the IOS telling her how many of our supporters found the idea of wheelchair users leading the march offensive because they feel it appears as if the IOS wanted to use their disability to plead sympathy for a civil rights issue.

ACT will be giving evidence to the House of Lords inquiry into cannabis on 28 April.

Clare Hodges
Director, ACT
Leeds

British Deaf Association is fair

Susie Maine (*DN March*) is a deaf woman who has to date rejected the Deaf community and allied herself with her hearing colleagues. She considers herself as a "hearing" person.

That is her right, her choice and the British Deaf Association (BDA) would not wish to remove or interfere with that choice.

However, I would refute her assertion that the BDA has written only "negative things about implants".

The BDA has done no more

Jesus brought a challenge

I share the frustration of many disabled people who experience the discriminatory practices of most British churches.

This is not just felt in lack of physical access to buildings, but in the way people with impairments are often victimised through being made to feel more sinful than others, targeted for inappropriate prayer and through inflexible meeting and leadership structures.

I will continue to protest against insensitive responses to my impairments in the Church.

I believe that this is the challenge Jesus brought as he dealt with the disabling attitudes of his own society.

Mandy Hudson
London W7

than consistently call for fair and impartial access to information and advice for parents of deaf children who are facing a choice.

We ask that information about British Sign Language, the Deaf community and the Deaf culture in the UK is made available to anyone who has to face the choice of whether or not to undergo surgery for an implant.

Jeff McWhinney
Chief Executive, BDA
London EC2

Student diary

'you let me hold your hand now. You never let me do that before'

A close friend of mine at university revealed, after years of repression and to everyone's surprise, that she is homosexual.

Now she is honest with herself and others, she has completely different body language. It is much more relaxed. She says that being surrounded by heterosexual images made her feel ashamed of herself.

She is angry that there were never any homosexual role models – being gay is often socially unacceptable – and felt she should hide her sexual identity.

"Your body language has changed. You seem truly relaxed in your body, which you never did before. You used to be so stiff and tense all the time", exclaims my sister, who I have not seen for the last year and a half as she has been in Australia.

This comes as no surprise to me. I know my body language and "body attitude" has relaxed. This is partly because I have learnt to cope with my physical pain through doing Alexander technique, getting the right footwear and going swimming.

"You don't hide your hands under long sleeves anymore," my sister observes, "you let me hold your hand now. You never let me do that before".



By Marigold Hope

I forgot I used to do this. I had a difficult relationship with my body because parts of it – my hands, leg and feet – are unique, or commonly referred to as deformed or abnormal. I never had a disabled or "deformed" role model. They hardly exist.

Instead, I refused to acknowledge my differences, pretending they did not exist, just as the media does. I hid my hands and feet, denying a part of myself.

I fought to compensate for my differences, at times to the extent of having eating disorders. What has shocked me into accepting myself as seeing so many attractive "normal" bodied people at university having such distorted images of themselves. They, too, are plagued with a constant feeling of physical inadequacy, falling prey to eating disorders in pursuit of perfection.

Yet, compared to me, they are all physically "perfect". It made me realise that I, like them, wasn't bad after all.

Eating disorders are rife at my university, amongst both men and women. How much is the media to blame for this? Isn't it time we had more diverse role models in the media?

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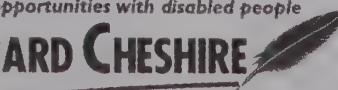
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Creating opportunities with disabled people

LEONARD CHESHIRE



DN's diary

By Dan Batten

Take on?

Dawn Saunders, the mother of three who stripped for a leukaemia charity, has been alleged by a Sunday rag to be a madam. Upon hearing the news, the Musgrove Leukaemia Group were horrified, and said they "would not be seeking Mrs Saunders' help again". Do I sense a hasty cover up? In the light of her donation, the group can't complain of being (st)ripped off.

Benefit-up

Anne Begg has been given an extra £20,000 in expenses to help her carry out her parliamentary duties. Radar director Bert Massie says he looks forward "to the same humane approach being adopted for all disabled people". Optimistic – after all, not everyone has the justifiable expense of polishing and maintaining gold wheels.

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Disabled actors had to play at being non-disabled in the trenches

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Nearly out of

A new TV drama uses as many as 25 disabled actors. It is a brave

Carlton Television claims to have broken new ground in employing as many as 25 disabled actors in a mainstream TV drama starting this month.

The scene for its new drama series *The Unknown Soldier* is France in 1918. A platoon of British soldiers befriend a stranger who they name Angel after he saves the life of one of their officers.

Angel, who can neither speak nor recall his identity, soon finds himself back in England in a country estate hospital, where he falls in love with one of the nurses.

Much of the first episode allows the pair's relationship to develop, with the disabled actors appearing in the intervening scenes.

This is unsurprising, as producer Michael Buck says Carlton had wanted to produce "a sweeping romance in which the audience could totally lose themselves."

But disability issues are not overlooked. There is a heavy emphasis on the need to be cured – which of course was necessary then for war service but is bound to spark up an ethics debate now with many disabled people.

The drama also underlines the fact that disability – physical or mental – once allowed

you to be excused from public duties such as army service.

Not so for Carlton's production team: the principal disabled actors had to act as non-disabled in the scenes before they received injuries. Actor Mathew Fraser (who plays Baker, one of the three main disabled characters) said: "The shoe was on the other foot in this. They wanted disabled actors so we had to fake the able-bodied bit. I had to wear these long prosthetic arms and Dave (Kent, who plays a blinded soldier) had to wear glass eyes and pretend he could see."

Kent himself says the show was a "brilliant foresight on Carlton's part". "I think a lot of people are worried about employing people with disabilities," he says. "They ask themselves: 'Is it going to take longer to get the scene done, and will it increase the budget?' This is just not the case."

But is there not a slight blemish here on an otherwise commendable achievement?

Given that Carlton was so determined to give greater prominence to disabled actors, could it not have gone just that little bit further and had one play Angel himself?

As it is, the actor playing Angel – Gary Mavers, the 'heartthrob' from *Peak Prac-*

tice – is of course most definitely not disabled. The film gives full exposure to this fact by allowing him to display his naked and finely-tuned physique early on in the pro-



Watts (left, played by Andrew McLay)

Time to i

One disabled cast me

One disabled member of the cast is hoping that his performance in *The Unknown Soldier* will help him win the one big aid that has so far eluded him in his career – an agent.

Andrew McLay, who plays Watts, a friend of Angel with spinal injuries, has certainly been plugging away at acting since a traffic accident in May 1987 at the age of 22 led to paralysis from the waist down and a big change of career.

"I nearly died," he says. "Things like that focus your mind on the priorities."

He is candid about what talent he has. "There are talented actors, there are intelligent actors, and there are ones who have had to work hard," he says. "I am one of those who has to work hard."

But that has not stopped him making some headway. He has been on the TV series *Dangerfield*, and was "technical adviser" to the actor James Wilby, who played Lord Chatterley in the last TV adaptation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. That, he said, was rewarding training. "James wanted to do it right and to learn how to move in a chair," he says. "I showed him."

Then of course there was *The Unknown Soldier*. He says Carlton was very switched on to his needs, and no, disabled people were not just being used as a backdrop. "There are three

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A unique garden at this year's Chelsea Flower Show, sponsored by Action for Blind People, Scope and Disability Now, welcomes people of all abilities.

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Groups of brightly coloured plants are used as focal points for garden features or to mark entrances. They have been chosen for their texture, scent and tactile qualities as well as colour.

"Water plays an important part in the design, from the lion's head gargyle to the simple, restful boulder and pebble 'bubble fountain'", says designer Geoffrey Whiten.

His garden breathes relaxation, with plenty of places to pause or sit down, and a timber-covered alcove hide-away.

There is a decorative dovecot and many pots and containers of bright bedding plants.

Geoffrey Whiten has designed gardens at Chelsea for 25 years, and won six gold medals. Now with mobility problems himself, he has set about proving



A new vision: Geoffrey Whiten

that a well-planned garden can be accessible to everyone.

Approved by the design charity, the Centre for Accessible Environments, the garden will be opened by actress, writer and cake maker Jane Asher on 18 May.

The winner of a prize draw will be able to take the garden and rebuild it so that it continues to give pleasure and inspiration.

Public opening: 21 May 8am-8pm, 22 May 8am-5pm. Half-day £14, full day £25 (£23 on Friday). Wheelchair helper free.

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- Scope, the biggest UK disability charity, enables people with cerebral palsy and associated disabilities to lead fulfilling lives by running services and campaigns.
- DN is the UK's leading disability newspaper.



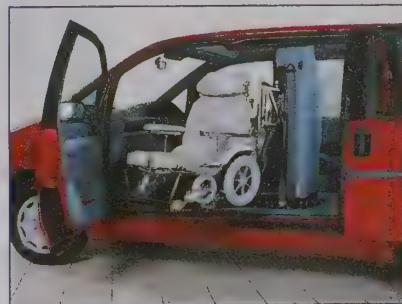
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Blooming good ideas

Rod Hermeston
finds places to
inspire you

If your green fingers have become jaded and you are looking for new gardening ideas, or if you are newly disabled, here are some places you can turn to for inspiration.

Horticultural Therapy (HT), tel: (01373) 464782, has four demonstration gardens, which show how gardening can be made accessible, for instance with raised plant beds.

The gardens are based at Battersea Park, Hackney, Reading, and Coventry. HT provides over 100 leaflets on making gardening accessible



for disabled people and has its national flower show in the Battersea garden on 24 June.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), will be holding a *Gardening for People with Disabilities Day*, on 25 June at the 240 acre RHS Garden, Wisley. It will include a session in Wisley's garden for disabled people (above), and a talk on using the right tools, adopting

the best posture, and gardening at different heights. £30 for members, £35 for non members.

Nicky Pickett, educational events organiser, says: "Many people visit Wisley and use our wheelchairs, so we decided we should provide an event for them and other people with disabilities. Our garden for people with disabilities has easy access, with raised beds and scented plants, a tactile sculpture, a pool and fountain."

For more details contact Nicky Pickett, tel: (01483) 224234.

Thorngrove (below), tel: (01747) 822242, is a horticulture training centre in North Dorset for people with cerebral palsy run by Scope, tel: 0171-619 7100. It includes an accessible plant shop and is supplying plants for the Freedom Garden.

General manager, Phil Hunter, says: "It is worth a visit to see what disabled people can achieve in an accessible environment."

Horticulture for All, tel: (01747) 822242, produces the booklet *Accessible Gardening* priced £12.50. This is a guide to adapted gardening techniques.

The National Federation of City Farms, tel: 0117-923 1800, has details on access to city farms and community gardens.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind, tel: 0171-388 1266, produces a number of books and leaflets on gardening.

The Sensory Trust, tel: (01793) 526244, has a database of accessible countryside sites for disabled people throughout



the UK, and produces a book *Discovering Wildlife*, priced £8.

The Gardening for the Disabled Trust, The Freight, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 3PG, gives advice and small grants to allow disabled people to continue gardening.

Action for Blind People, tel: 0171-732 8771, has a sensory garden at Penshurst Place, in Tonbridge, Kent, and has information on sensory gardens around the country.

The Fieldfare Trust, tel: 0114-270 1668, also keeps information on accessible sites.

For general ideas, why not turn to the National Trust (NT), tel: 0171-222 9251? The



Beautiful blossom: The rhododendrons of Sheffield Park Garden
NATIONAL TRUST PHOTOGRAPHIC LIBRARY/NICK MEERS

Trust has produced a free guide, *Information for Visitors with Disabilities 1998*, giving details of access to NT properties. The guide is available in large-print, tape, and items can be brailled.

Powerchairs are available for hire free from 50 NT properties. Guidebooks may be available in braille, large print and tape at some venues and the NT is trying to have more audio tours, while some sites are geared to meet the needs of hearing impaired people.

Three good gardens are Stourhead in Wiltshire, tel: (01747) 841152, which is wheelchair accessible with a strong companion. Plants include rhododendrons and azaleas. Sheffield Park Garden, tel: (01825) 790231, in Uckfield, East Sussex, is a fine garden with plenty of flowers, many of them wild. Like Beningbrough Hall and Garden, tel: (01904) 470666, near York, it has good access. Beningbrough includes a collection of scented plants.

Valerie Wenham, NT advisor on facilities for disabled visitors, says: "We get lots of letters from disabled visitors saying how much they enjoyed the properties. The gardens are very inspirational."

The NT Spring Plant Fair will take place on 17 May at many of the Trust's venues.

English Heritage (EH), tel: 0171-973 3434, has a free *Guide for Visitors with Disabilities*.

Among EH sites, Brodsworth Hall and Gardens, tel: (01302) 722598, near Doncaster, has an important national collection of aromatic Portland Roses. Walmer Castle and Gardens, tel: (01304) 364288, in Kent, houses a bed of fragrant Queen Mother Roses and its Queen Mother's garden was specially designed with ramps.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, tel: 0181-332 5000, has easy access to all areas of the garden and glasshouses, except for the Marianne North Gallery. Highlights during May include bluebells, azaleas and lilacs, and roses and scented plants in June and July.

Other large gardens include The Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, tel: 0131-552 7171.

The National Gardens Scheme, tel: (01483) 211535, publishes *Gardens of England and Wales*, annually, priced £4.50, listing garden events and access details.

The Scottish Gardens Scheme, tel: 0131-229 1870 is similar and publishes *Gardens of Scotland*, priced £3.75.

Please contact the individual sites to check that your requirements can be met.



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Access all areas



Webbs of Wychbold near Droitwich in the Midlands now includes this display of sensory plants

	DISABLED PARKING	HELP AVAILABLE	DISABLED TROLLEYS	CLEAR SIGNS ¹	COMMUNICATION AIDS	ACCESSIBLE AISLES AND SHELVES	CUSTOMERS CAN FEEL PLANTS	ACCESSIBLE TOILETS	
GARDEN CENTRE (location of branches)									ACCESSIBLE TOOLS SOLD
¹ Not in all stores ² Only in newer stores ³ Except Stirling, Kirkintilloch and Leeds ⁴ Wheelchair available ⁵ Not High Wycombe ⁶ Not Woldingham ⁷ Details only for Ware ⁸ Will give advice or help customer to car only									
Homebase (300 nationwide) Tel: 0181-784 7200	◆	◆	◆ ¹	◆		◆	◆	◆	Erin Gardena
B&Q (281 nationwide) Tel: (01703) 256256	◆	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆ ²	None
Klondyke/Strikes (13 in Scotland/the North) Tel: (01324) 711727	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆ ³	Wolf Wilkinson Sword
Kennedys (13 in the South/Midlands) Tel: (01344) 860022	◆	◆ ⁴		◆		◆	◆	◆	Wolf Erin Gardena
Hillier (11 in the South) Tel: (01794) 368733	◆ ¹	◆		◆		◆	◆		Wolf, Flymo Fiskars Erin Gardena
Dobbies (9 in Scotland/North-East) Tel: 0131-663 1941	◆	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆	None
Jardinerie (6, mostly in Midlands) Tel: (01452) 723823	◆ ⁵	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆	Garden claw
Findlay Clark (4 in Scotland) Tel: (01360) 620721	◆	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆	Wolf Erin Gardena
Knights (4 in Surrey) Tel: (01883) 653142	◆	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆ ⁶	None
Pennells (2 in Lincolnshire) Tel: (01522) 880044	◆	◆ ⁴		◆		◆	◆	◆	Wolf
Haskins (2 in Hants and Dorset) Tel: (01202) 593355	◆	◆ ⁴		◆		◆	◆	◆	Many brands
Van Hage (2 in Herts ⁷) Tel: (01920) 870811	◆	◆ ⁸		◆		◆	◆	◆	None, but could be ordered
Bridgemere Garden World (1 in Cheshire) Tel: (01270) 521100	◆	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆	Many brands
Webbs of Wychbold (1 in Worcestershire)	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	Some easy-grip tools

DN's first ever survey of garden centres shows them pulling out the stops

This newspaper regularly carries out accessibility surveys of all kinds of facilities around the country. Some have been rather dispiriting reading.

So it comes as a pleasant surprise to find that garden centres are adapting very well. Many of the managers we spoke to for this survey seemed to be fully aware of accessibility issues. This is borne out in the responses to our questionnaire (see table below).

Of course, more could be done. The table shows that deaf people's needs do not seem to get a look in. And it is also worth bearing in mind that while the garden centres themselves may provide signs in large print for those who are visually impaired, the manufacturers of the products they sell still have to catch on:

plant labels are generally in very small lettering.

But otherwise disabled gardeners seem to be well catered for. Those of you we spoke to were impressed.

The big national chains were praised. Homebase staff were said to be helpful, while B & Q has a "diamond card" scheme which gives the over 60s a 10 per cent discount every Wednesday at most stores.

But the smaller centres are proving their worth too. Webbs of Wychbold near Droitwich in Worcestershire last month opened a new display of sensory plants. Our investigator's only complaint was that this was not easy to find – a shame, he said, because otherwise "they have done everything they can", to help disabled people.

Bloomin' generous

A leading specialist company that puts wheelchair users on the road as drivers or passengers is helping DN produce this gardening supplement.

Constables has generously contributed half the colour printing costs.

Constables make the unique Carchair system, an all-purpose wheelchair which can

adapt into the front seat of a standard production car so you don't need to buy a special vehicle. It can now be installed in the Chrysler Voyager and the Mercedes V-Class people carrier.

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DN5/98



Kelly Ruffell's love of plants has led to a college course in horticulture

I have been interested in plants since I saw my grandad planting onions in his garden at the age of two. I thought then: "How I would love to do horticulture," and I have wanted to be a gardener ever since.

My parents have a flat, and as there is no garden, this is one of the incentives for me to stay at the RNIB College in Redhill during term time, where I am doing a national vocational qualification in horticulture. I am in charge of the water fountain in the sensory garden at the weekends.

I am very interested in cacti – I breed them in pots. I like cacti because of the prickles –

Budding gardener

you can feel them and spot them a mile off. It is a real challenge trying to plant them.

I also like bedding out plants and growing venus fly traps. In my spare time, I study hypnotherapy so I am not gardening all the time.

I am blind in one eye and my sight is deteriorating in the other, so sometimes I have problems on the course. When I am moving around the garden I sometimes bump into things with the wheelbarrow.

Many of the other students are blind or have other disabilities. We have some specially adapted tools to help us, such as one-handed wheelbarrows and different coloured spades so that we can see them better. Some of these we invented ourselves, such as brightly coloured boards for cutting turf. When



It's a dirty job – but someone likes to do it...

we take cuttings we use sand so that we can see the holes.

The college has made adaptations. The greenhouse entrance has been painted yellow so that it can be seen more clearly. We have yellow lines around the site, and textured pavements to help find our way between different residential blocks.

There is a lot of practical work on the course, especially at the moment. We call this the "silly season" because everything is growing fast.

In the future I would like to have my own place and plot of land so I can do what I want – sowing, planting and digging. I would also like to work for others, in big gardens like Kew – in their cactus greenhouse.

Betty Gunter would be lost without her scooter

Using a scooter in my 100ft plus garden allows me to continue a hobby which I've enjoyed for many years.

Paving stones have been put down to provide scooter access which enables me to reach most parts of the garden, including the greenhouse.

If I cannot garden while sitting on my scooter, I put a plastic bag on the ground which I sit on, and move myself along to plant or weed, using the scooter as a support.

It is far less tiring to garden on my scooter and I can complete a lot more jobs in a limited time. I can carry tools, bags of rubbish and buckets of soil easily from one place to another. I can even carry items to and from the car or house.

Picking plums presented a



Potting perfect: Betty gets to work

Scooter garden

problem for example – now I can stand up using the scooter for support and can even sit

out all the old fruited blackberry branches and raspberry canes and then cutting and



On yer bottom: Betty with her polyanthias

down to pick those on the lower branches.

Plastic bags are very useful – for example for carrying items to use in the garden if you use crutches, or for keeping things together if you use a wheelchair or scooter.

If you need to get down from the scooter, the grass is wet and you want to sit down, large builder's sacks can be used to great advantage.

Maybe you are concerned that your feet might become infected during gardening. Some people protect their feet by putting plastic bags over their shoes, and tie them up with string. Probably not a great fashion statement, but if it means getting out into your garden and enjoying it, what does it matter?

It has been a busy autumn and winter, what with cutting

bagging them up to take to the rubbish dump.

The tree surgeons have pruned the acer while it was dormant. They cleared up and shredded the prunings which I've kept to mulch the garden with. The more mulch you put down the better it will be for short-term weed suppression and water retention. Long-term, it's beneficial for breaking up the soil and making it more fertile.

Most recently, I've been potting out new plants.

Companies such as Dobies, and Thompson & Morgan produce wonderfully illustrated brochures.

The plants arrive in the post at the right time of year for planting, with all the detailed notes you need to produce really good blossoms.

The petunia Doubloon Pink



Tender loving care: Kelly Ruffell plants out

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Cutting out the hassle

Sue Bennison describes the benefits of low maintenance gardening

In 1993 I decided to treat myself to a professionally

- Front garden. To be sunny and open – a help as I required a ramp to the front door and paths across the lawn to where I park the car. Perhaps gravel instead of lawn, with plants growing through.
- Rear garden. A patio area which would be raised and ramped. I wanted better access



Drawing admiration: Sue's new front garden takes shape in 1997

designed and constructed low maintenance garden.

I have multiple sclerosis (ms) and, at the time, could manage to walk with sticks. But I realised that, as time passed, my ability to garden would decrease while wheelchair use and fatigue would increase. So mowing lawns was out.

Brief to landscape gardener

I wanted a garden that would take little time and effort to maintain, which I could sit in or look out at.

Although low-maintenance, it was not to be low impact. I specified year-round greenery, plenty of spring and summer colour, and scents – which I hope will attract birds.

around the garden – to my garage and all the beds. A lawn, bird table and dustbin were also thrown into the equation.

Choosing a design

I found two experts, one recommended, the other from Yellow Pages (having checked they were professionals). In the event I preferred the second group, called Graduate Gardeners. They incorporated my ideas with some of theirs in a creative, unfussy design.

They suggested digging up both lawns, front and rear. The front (a smaller area) was to be replaced with pebbles on top of porous mats which smother weeds. The rear lawn

was to be replaced with shrubs in a deep covering of bark mulch with ground-cover plants. Paving would be laid under the existing pergola (below) to give a shady corner.

The project was split into two phases, late 1993 and early 1994. It would be paid for in two lots (£1,600 and £2,600) to help my budget.



Job done: The new paving slabs and mulch are finally in place

Hindsight

I should have installed a watering system at the start. I had the "leaky hose" system (under the shingle/mulch, dripping water to the roots) installed in 1996. This is less tiring and better for conservation. Warm paving slabs and shrubbery are attractive to neighbouring moggies – so I bought a water gun!

Initially, replacing the lawn



with shingle looked odd. Now established, plants are flowing over boulders and drawing admiring glances. Remember the garden will take two years to grow. After this...just enjoy!

Useful plants

These are some suitable plants: Front garden: *Ceanothus*, *Thyrsoflorus repens*; *Genista Lydia*; *Phormium Tenax*. Back garden: *Lonicera Pileata*; *Escallonia*; *Garrya Elliptica*; *Cytisus Praedox*.

Graduate Gardeners, Calfway Lane, Near Stroud, Gloucs GL6 7AQ, tel: (01452) 770273.

lening

a new cascading variety, has just ed and I have planted it into small as I'm hesitant to plant them out, n case we get another frost. In a or two, weather permitting, they be planted in tubs on the patio. iling lobelia, in a range of colours, ys looks great. When small they can anted in dots alongside any other s – in tubs, containers, hanging ets and pouches.

y number of shops and nurseries sell e plants, or quantities in boxes, but es involve carrying them home. dering them by mail can have its ntages. If the plants don't come up andard, inform the company imme- ly. Reputable companies guarantee plants, but you should ensure that e taken care of them and followed nstructions carefully.

ne companies appear to be expen- out usually the plants are posted in al boxes or containers to ensure arrive in tip-top condition.



access: The scooter helps when ing back the raspberry canes



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Tooling up for the job

Tim Spurgeon tells you how to get started

Choosing tools to make your gardening easier depends on a lot of things.

Do you, for example, stand, sit, kneel or even lie down to garden? Do you work close to the soil level and need short-handled tools or would longer-handled ones be more useful?

Do you need tools that can be used one-handed or that don't need a strong grip?

Can some tools be used for a range of jobs?

Your garden can also be made easier to manage through planning. Is it well laid out? Have you chosen plants that need a lot of maintenance? How do you plan the jobs in your garden?

It is easier to keep weeds under control if you attack them as soon as they emerge. Planning your gardening so that you do small amounts often will avoid putting extra stress on aching joints or limbs.

When you come to choose your tools, you will be amazed at the range in garden centres or hardware stores. Many modern tools are lightweight, made of aluminium alloy, carbon fibre or plastic, and so are easy to use, even if they have long handles. The lightest tools with the widest handles usually allow an easier grip.

Rubazote, from Helping Hands, is a rubberised tubing that slips over the handles of

tools to give an even easier grip. The sponge tubing for insulating domestic water systems can be used in a similar way, but tends to be less durable.

For cutting, try a pair of ratchet pruners – lightweight and relatively inexpensive, starting at £6. They cut easily through even thick, woody stems with a ratchet action that just needs several gentle squeezes of the handles.

Pruners with longer handles need less manual pressure but are for two hands.

Most hand tools have a "straight" hold: the handle is in line with the tool head. If you find this difficult, try the Fistgrip range from Peta. The handles are at right-angles to



Wolf Garden: one handle fits all

the tool heads, giving a more comfortable grip and action. With extension handles and arm supports, the tools can be used easily with one hand. The add-on handles are a real bonus



A good grip: Davy Somers using a Peta fork in Horticultural Therapy's organic gardens at Ryton-on-Dunsmore, near Coventry

because they can be attached to other tools too.

Some companies, including Wolf Garden, produce multi-change tools with various handles, from 30cm (12in) to over 2m (6ft). All you need is a handle of the right length and tool heads that snap, clip or twist on to the handle.

If you want to collect clippings or weeds, there are plenty of alternatives to the traditional wheelbarrow. The Trailer Barrow Company and the Agrifab Wheelbarrow are two-wheeled barrows that can be used with one hand. Or you could get a "caddie", a wheeled cart which holds a bin liner for waste collection and has extra storage for your tools. They are available from a number of companies including Erin Gardena and Hozelock.

When you buy tools, make sure you try them out for weight and balance – apply the same principle as for buying clothes.

For more information, get yourself the third edition (just published) of *Gardening – an Equipment Guide* from the Disability Information Trust.

Each section introduces a gardening task and covers suitable tools, with illustrations, as well as prices and suppliers. Subjects include hand tools, lawns, watering, greenhouses and raised beds. It's excellent value at £7.50.

Finally, if you cannot find a tool or piece of equipment to meet your needs, contact your local REMAP panel – groups of engineers who can adapt or tailor-make a tool to suit you.

Disability Information Trust, tel: (01865) 227592. *Erin Gardena*, tel: (01462) 896989. *Helping Hands*, tel: 0116-270 8821. *Hozelock*, tel: (01844) 292002. *Peta UK*, tel: (01245) 231811. *REMAP*, tel: (01732) 883818. *Trailer Barrow*, tel: (01825) 733291. *Wolf Garden*, tel: (01495) 306600.

Tim Spurgeon is operations director of Horticultural Therapy (HT), which produces a leaflet, Tools for Easier Gardening. Send a cheque or postal order for £1.50 to HT, Goulds Ground, Vallis Way, Frome, BA11 3DW, tel: (01373) 464782.

Here's good value for money

Anne Davies' tips

If most of your gardening is done on the patio or a piece of concrete, you need containers.



I've found a large, grey, "pseudo-stone" one by Plantpak which will take a Ken Muir Minarette (tel: (01255) 830181) fruit tree easily. You could have a miniature orchard of apples, pears, and so on, providing fruit for years to come.

Save your strength and back – avoid lifting a full container by buying the heavy duty, plastic Megapot on castors (£16).

Hanging baskets and troughs that are self watering are good value. Or you could pay more for longer lasting pleasure: the Lincoln Wrought Iron range has jardinières of various



Strong: Town & Country gloves

heights or there's a super three-tier fountain with baskets.

In tests, two of the cheapest composts – Homebase "multi-purpose" and Murphy – gave the best results, with J Arthur Bowers' New Horizon best of the peat-free. Gro-bags at 99p from Asda are good value too.

Add Swellgel granules or Basket-mate (water storing granules and feed combined) before planting.

Don't forget gloves. I like Town & Country's crinkle finish, latex-coated cotton ones – they are good thorn protectors (£6).

For cheap bedding, buy strips of five to six plants (about 80p) at a nursery. Try lobelia (trailing) and petunias in a basket. And don't forget seeds such as sweet peas and runner beans grown up stakes. A Tumbler tomato plant (about 79p) in a container or hanging basket will give you pounds of small, sweet tomatoes at a fraction of the shop price.

Scatter love in the mist and candytuft for a mass of colour. They seed themselves so there will be more next year. Your local garden centre should stock most of these items.

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Offers to get you going

Creating a Low Allergen Garden by Lucy Huntingdon, a new hard-back from Mitchell Beazley,

£14.99, has lavish colour illustrations and ideas which informed three Chelsea gardens. DN has 12 FREE copies for the first readers who write in.



Grow It Yourself, Gardening with a Disability, by Roddy Llewellyn and Anne Davies, (Cedar, £3.99) is a

paperback full of plant ideas and tips. DN has six FREE copies. Send your name and address on a postcard marked *Low Allergen* or *Grow It* to DN by 1 June.



Flowers get physical



Pretty and practical: the display of medicinal plants at the Chelsea Physic Garden

flower remedies will always appeal because of their philosophical rather than scientific basis. But too many herbal plants become fads and overharvesting from the wild is causing increasing problems with a number of species.

One of the best forms of therapy using plants is gardening itself! It can provide healthful relaxation and exercise – as I point out in *The Healing Garden* (see left).

The Ayurvedic Company of Great Britain, tel: 0171-370 2255
Bach Flower Remedies, tel: (01491) 834678

British Herbal Medicine Association, tel: (01453) 751389
The General Council and Register of Consultant Herbalists, Marlborough House, Swanpool, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 4HW
The Herb Society, tel: (01295) 692900

National Institute of Medical Herbalists, tel: (01392) 426022
The Natural Medicines Group, PO Box 5, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8LX
The Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine, PO Box 400, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 9NZ

Sue Minter is curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden, 66 Royal Hospital Road, London SW3, tel: 0171-352 5646. Open 12-5pm during Chelsea Flower Show week, 1-5 June.

are imitations of a substance found in a plant, or they copy the mode of action of a plant compound.

The active ingredient of aspirin, now made synthetically, was originally found in the British native wildflower meadowsweet in 1835.

Some of our most useful drugs are synthetic. Sodium cromoglycate (Intal) for preventing attacks of asthma, one of the commonest inhaler drugs, is a compound derived from "khella" (*Ammi visnaga*), a member of the carrot family grown in Egypt.

A related species, bullwort, is used to treat disfiguring skin diseases such as psoriasis, vitiligo and some skin malignancies.

Parkinson's disease is now treated by synthetic drugs, but it was once treated by extract of thornapple. The modern drugs copy thornapple's mode of action.

Drug companies often approach gardens such as Kew and the Chelsea Physic Garden for plant supplies. One company is working with a tribal group in Guinea to produce a drug for type II diabetes.

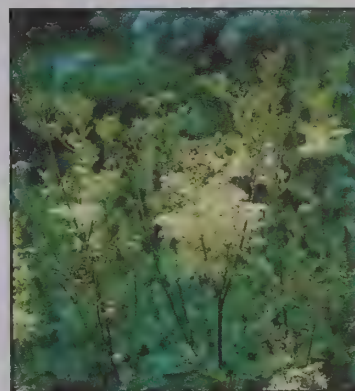
Sometimes controversial issues are raised through research – such as the potential of cannabinoids from hemp in treating asthma and MS.

Two-thirds of British GPs now refer patients to alternative therapy practitioners, chiropractors, reflexologists etc. Many use plant remedies. Aromatherapy, for example, (the therapeutic use of essential oils from plants) is used in palliative care in the NHS to improve mood and alleviate depression, either by inhalation or massage.

Keen gardeners can grow many of the plants involved in sunny places with well-drained soils, although you will need to buy the distilled essential oils

and the carrier oils for treatment from companies such as the Body Shop.

Good species to choose would



From meadowsweet came aspirin

be rosemary, lavender, camomile, peppermint, clary sage and jasmine. They can usually be bought as seed or young plants in spring from

most garden centres. The Chelsea Physic Garden has a border of these plants to show how decorative they can be.

If disability is severe, or if more conventional treatments fail, some people turn to any "natural" remedy. Not everything that is natural is safe – think of strychnine. So I would counsel caution, particularly until there are good systems of registration of practitioners and quality control of ingredients.

Having said that, there are interesting reports of success in certain treatment systems, such as eczema in traditional Chinese medicine and rheumatoid arthritis in Ayurvedic medicine using ginger and castor oil.

Some treatments such as homeopathy or the Bach

The Healing Garden

Sue Minter's book, *The Healing Garden*, shows how gardening can be a healthful relaxation as well as exercise. Published by Headline, it is normally £11.99. But you can buy it for only £6 if you visit the Chelsea Physic Garden with a copy of the Gardening Supplement.

produced in Brazil from plantations of the tree *Pilocarpus microphyllus*.

Peppermint oil, prescribed for irritable bowel syndrome, is field-grown in America. And there are similar stories for the muscle-relaxant tubocurarine, and evening primrose oil (for severe eczema).

Sometimes the drug companies use natural plant material as a starter in the production cycle and meet nature half way. Most of the topical steroids, such as Betnovate, start life as extracts of yam (*Dioscorea* species) or of sisal (*Agave sisalana*) grown in plantations.

The main objection many people have to synthetic drugs is that they are so far removed from nature. But, in fact, many drugs have not been designed out of the air by chemists; they

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he trenches now

ature from the norm, but Lisa Hitchen finds some familiar attitudes behind the scenes

a. Mavers himself enthuses about g with disabled colleagues. (Kent) had to put these glass to go over the trenches as a sight-on, and he did it brilliantly – in ce,” he says. “It must have been



ospital with Angel (Gary Mavers)

clude us

er talks to Peter Baber

ed characters with speaking” he says. “They concentrated on characters rather than our disability. They wanted to see us as people and only got these injuries in this war.” When he maintains that TV companies as a whole are much more amenable to the idea of disabled people becoming visible and taking on more roles in mainstream theatres. “It’s really the idea of people in the West End,” he says, “they are very negative.” He says there are tentative signs of movement in traditional theatre – as the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) planning to take some disabled students in the next two years. But drama schools are “pretty crap”. To improve this situation, Andrew has set up a new theatre group called Front. This includes actors with disabilities, but he is keen to stress it is not for them. The whole idea is to promote inclusive theatre, with non-disabled actors too. The group has just finished rehearsing for a performance it will give in London on 14 June as part of an inclusive arts campaign. “I certainly have high hopes for the group’s future. He even thinks it could eventually be self-funding, something that conventional groups have failed to achieve. “Disabled artists and directors are just as good and can be better than able-bodied,” he says. “If you are talented enough, and your art is good enough, and it entertains people, then I would say you are doing good work and never your abilities.”

quite a thing having to trust everyone around him but we did it. We all did it. We all helped each other.”

But you realise how much further disabled people trying

to make it in drama have to go when you ask him if it would have been better for the directors to use a disabled person in the lead. “Yes,” he says, “maybe it would have been dif-

ferent.” But then in a throw-away remark he adds: “They would have used actors.”

You can only wonder what he thought his colleagues were, if they too were not actors.



Actors walking wounded on set



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DAIHATSU

A Grand Move in more ways than one

Daihatsu's Grand Move offers great value for money, but Ron Salt found more plus points in this 'town and country carriage'

A limited edition version of the Daihatsu Grand Move is to join the range of five-door multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs) available under the Motability Leasehold scheme this month.

Disabled drivers who need comfortable space for a family of five and a wheelchair may find it is just what they have been looking for.

Not least because of the price. People who qualify can lease a Grand Move automatic version through Motability for three years, for just £350 plus their higher mobility component. For the manual version the news is even better. You can currently get one through Motability without having to make a down payment at all –

'You can get hold of a manual model through Motability without having to make a down payment – the only MPV where this is possible'

the only MPV at the moment where this is possible.

But there are other features that make this car attractive. The five-seater is an MPV in appearance rather than capacity. It is only a few inches longer than a Ford Escort and no wider. Yet from its lofty, airy interior, one looks down on the roofs of such lowly saloons.

Of course, transferring from a wheelchair to most car seats is rarely easy. MPV seats are further from the ground than conventional cars, so can present a challenge to weak arms. A rotating front seat doesn't help much: there is still a big difference between the seat level and the ground. But on the plus side, the Grand Move's doorstep is narrow and low, so the gap to be crossed is markedly less than what you get in most saloons.

In any case, drivers who can stow their wheelchairs in the boot and shuffle along outside to the driver's door will find the Grand Move a high scorer on a number of accessibility counts. The rear hatch is light, the back doorstep is comfortably flat and almost level with the loading platform, and there is a sturdy rack mounting rail to hang onto along the edge of the roof. Front-seat passengers usually get a grab handle above the door: the Grand Move has one above the driver's door and

both rear passenger doors as well. The rear seats can also fold forward to provide a completely flat loading floor.

Tall drivers and passengers should have no problem. They will still have plenty of room between their heads and the roof lining. There is loads of knee room too below the steering wheel.

The controls are all in easy reach, especially for those with arthritic fingers: the combined steering and ignition lock in particular is one of the most readily accessible I have come across. All four doors have electrically powered windows which can be controlled from a bank of rocker switches on the driver's door. The door mirrors are electrically operated too, by a circular pad on the fascia.

So on to driving. From cold, the automatic choke keeps the 1.5 litre 16-valve engine near 2,000rpm for about 45 seconds before dropping smoothly to normal idling speed – about 750rpm. The rev counter is then the only clue that the engine has not stalled.

With the automatic version, if the road is level, the Grand Move will begin to creep forward as soon as the brake is released. This, coupled with the



The Grand Move has a sturdy rail on the edge of the roof which you can hold on to as you manoeuvre

superb view of all four corners, wide turning circle and light steering effort makes it a delight to manoeuvre and park in town.

When cruising at 60mph, the engine turns over at about 3,000rpm in "drive", and wind noise becomes decidedly noticeable. But with disk brakes and ABS control on all four wheels, only the lightest pressure brings the car swiftly to rest.

Both front seat occupants are protected by airbags and there are side impact bars hidden inside the doors.

Getting out is easy. All doors open to 82 degrees and the high seat and higher doors keep the grunt factor out altogether. Electric central locking is

provided, and an infrared remote also arms the alarm.

The bent-wire bonnet prop is unreachable from a wheelchair. This is annoying because the rest of what you need to get at in a bonnet – the oil dipstick and fluid reservoirs – are within easy reach once the bonnet is lifted. Some juggling with a walking stick might just solve the problem.

Care will be needed in the choice and fitting of hand controls. Drivers who favour the standard right hand push/pull arrangement for brake and accelerator must make sure they can operate the indicators without losing their grip on the throttle. If they can't, they will need a thumb-switch on the handle or a

multiway infrared box on the wheel itself.

But those niggles aside, the Daihatsu Grand Move is hard to fault as an all-purpose town and country carriage, especially the automatic version we tried.

Its pricing structure compares very favourably with the popular Toyota Picnic range, whose Motability down payment is at least £2,000.

Aggressive competitive pricing cannot be the reason here, for Daihatsu is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Toyota. Perhaps the clue is in those words "Limited Edition". Do they want you to lease it now while stocks last? From what we saw, we think you should.

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Dear Ann

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

A UNIQUE SERVICE

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick can give disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor, Methodist local preacher, and has just gained a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. Talk to her on (01708) 882111 on Thursdays 1pm-5pm and Mondays 6pm-10pm.



Send your letters to: Ann Darnbrough, *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW

A potent problem for me I feel devastated. For the last two years I have been impotent. I had a wonderful relationship with my last partner and sex was an important part of that for both of us. But it has all fallen apart and now she has gone and left me.

I am disabled, but my doctor assures me that this is not the cause. In fact he seems baffled. He goes so far as to say that, at present, my condition cannot be cured.

What am I going to do? I can't imagine staying celibate for the rest of my life. I really miss the close warmth and affection a woman can give.

I suppose this could still be possible, but somehow any relationship fizzles out without that wonderful exploding climax that intercourse provides. I just want to have a normal life which would include raising a family.

George, Manchester

Whatever you do, do not give up. Believe me, women are more understanding than you think. We marvel at the incredi-

ble stamina of the penis but usually understand when erections prove impossible. There are many causes of impotence and many treatments. It is important you seek the help of a suitably qualified doctor. Don't put up with one who is "baffled". In some areas there are NHS clinics specialising in the treatment of impotence.

As a start I suggest you contact the Impotence Association helpline. It is most helpful and reassuring both to able-bodied and to disabled people who have impotence problems. As well as being ready to talk to you and discuss your particular difficulties, its staff also have some useful literature, including the various treatments that are available.

In the meantime, while your impotence may have broken up your last relationship there is no reason why it should be a barrier to starting another.

Docs won't help – can you? I have myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) and congenital hearing loss. I recently attended my third

Department of Social Security medical test, as I am on incapacity benefit (IB). As a result of the unsympathetic attitude of the doctors I saw, I am convinced that I will be declared "fit to work" and may well then have to return to my previous job as a solicitor.

I can only concentrate for about 15 minutes at a time and cannot do physical work. I cannot face going back to my previous job and would prefer to work at home.

Can you or any of DN's readers think of a job I could do in my present state of variable mental and physical fitness?

Sally, Peterborough

Some medics do seem to make an art of being daunting. I can only hope that your doctor's attitude belied his intentions and that you will not lose your entitlement to IB.

Doctors are trained to take an overall view of someone's capacity for work, taking into account varying conditions and the effects of pain and fatigue.

You will also have read that the Government has announced

proposed changes to the incapacity benefit system (see this month's issue), after strong criticism of the rules.

With your qualifications, there are bound to be local organisations – commercial or charitable – who would welcome freelance work which you could carry on at home, in your own time.

Some local newspapers carry free adverts and your library would list local organisations you could approach.

It would be worth drawing up a simple letter outlining your particular legal skills and sending it round to see what response you get. But if any readers have a better idea, please write in to me.

Don't freak out a first date When I date someone new, I am unsure when and how much to tell them about the extent of my physical disability.

I don't want to lie about it, but I also don't want to scare them off before they get a chance to know the real me.

Talking about the details of bodily conditions in any case

beats watching paint dry for boredom. It is really no way to build up a romantic image for someone else.

Peter, Birmingham

Most of us have had to face this problem with new romances.

Personally I have found it useful to rate new acquaintances by their tolerance level of my difficulties. Really upfront honesty is the best policy because if your new friend is not up to the challenge, you might as well know sooner than later.

But whatever you do, don't go directly into long descriptions of symptoms and details of treatments. That would be a real turn-off. You have much more interesting things to talk about, such as what your interests are.

Limiting our new positions My partner and I have always had wonderful sex but in the last few months it has become increasingly difficult to find a comfortable position for intercourse due to my stiffening and painful arthritic joints.

My partner is wonderfully patient but I know his concern for my comfort dampens his ardour. There seem to be fewer and fewer positions that we can manage and we are used to variety. I don't want our love life to go out with a whimper.

Christine, Dover

What you are looking for is support, and pillows are probably not adequate for this.

I recently read about one woman whose love life had been revolutionised since she discovered the bean bag chair.

It stays more or less in the position you mould it in. You can make small changes to position and not find yourself falling over when passions rise. It provides support and minimises leg cramping because the strain is off the legs. It is light and easy to transfer to the bed.

In fact, the extent of a bean bag's uses is up to the imagination of the two of you.

The Impotence Association, PO Box 10296, London SW17 7ZN. For the helpline, tel: 0181-767 7791.



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Lindsey Etchell of Rica helps you narrow the choice of steam irons on the market

Whether you love or loathe ironing probably says a lot more about you than your particular iron. But Rica's assessment of 17 steam irons shows that design contributes to how easy the job is.

We checked out steam irons because there is a wider choice of models – most irons sold now are steam irons. All those tested could be used dry, but the steam helps get creases out so should need less effort.

Iron design

All irons have a flat back, or heel (so they can be stood upright), and a handle that goes from back to front, with the temperature control usually below it and the steam controls on top at the front.

The differences for ease of use are in the detail: the thickness and shape of the handle and the position, size, shape and stiffness of the controls – particularly important if you have painful or limited grip. If your sight is poor, the size and colour of markings and labels will make a difference.

Water is usually poured into the iron through a hole at the front. Rica's factsheet shows that some, when filled, were twice the weight of others. Lighter irons are easier to lift, but you may feel that you need to press harder.

Filling and emptying

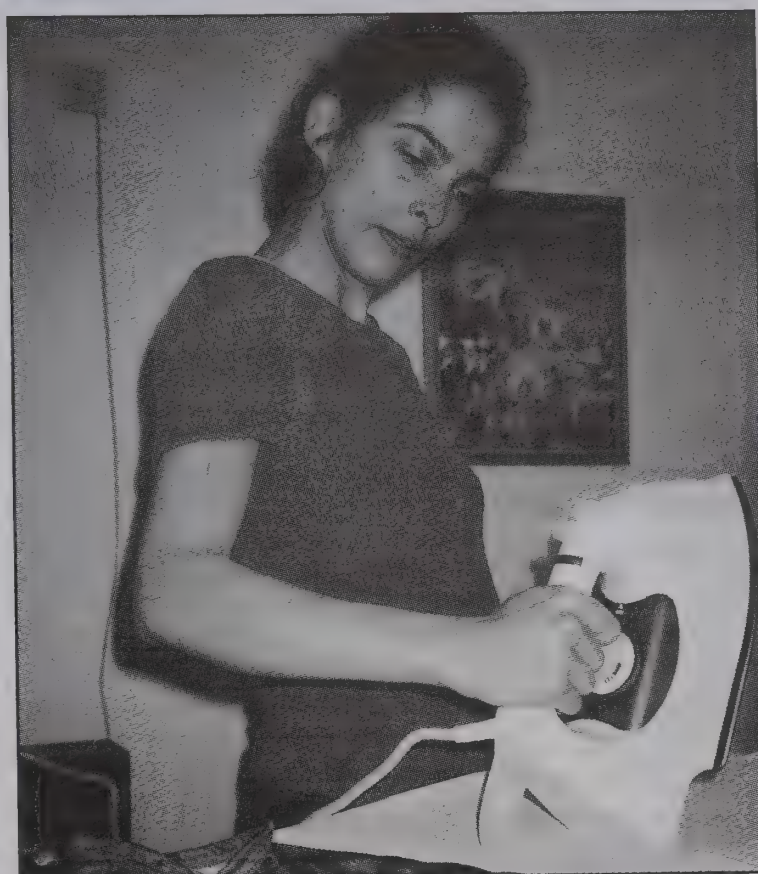
Manufacturers specify the water to use in their iron – distilled, deionised, demineralised, or

On test

Boots Steam Iron STM 1 £20; Carlton Jet of Steam JS803 £22; Kenwood Emerald ST622 £25; Morphy Richards Rapport 42300 £17; Morphy Richards 40450 £14; Moulinex Chronomate 30 AX4 £18; Moulinex Ultimate 200 VS6 £37; Philips Mistral 20 HI 220 £19; Philips Mistral Elan 82 HI 282 £35; Philips Azur Excel 20 HI 520 £50; Rowenta Surfline Inox DE 313 £40; Rowenta Delphino DE 132 £30; Rowenta Professional Inox DE 811 £45; Russell Hobbs 4668 £20; Tefal Ultraglisse Filter-scale Pro 2037 £49; Tefal Prima 10 Ultraglisse 1460 £25; Ufesa PV 156 Vertinox 1500 £35.

• For a copy of Rica's free factsheet, *Choosing an iron that's easy to use*, send an A4 SAE to Rica, 24 Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RX. This series of reports in DN has been made possible by Glaxo Wellcome plc.

All ironed out



"Very comfortable" said Caroline Payne of Kenwood's Emerald ST622
LISA HITCHEN

plain tap water. Most could be filled one-handed with the iron standing on its heel or base.

Ease of filling was affected by the size and angle of the filling hole. Holding the iron up to empty it is when you notice the weight. Seeing the water level while ironing varied a lot depending on the colour and density of the viewing area.

Dials and buttons

Most of the irons had a well

sized dial for setting temperature. They varied in ease of grip (some had a smooth, slippery edge) and turn (the lighter the force needed, the better). The Tefal Ultraglisse Filter-scale had a slider control, needing light but fairly precise setting.

A few irons had the dial at the front, but on most it was below the handle. If you have swollen joints, check before buying that you can hold the handle without brushing against the control.

★ Best buys ★

The Kenwood Emerald ST622 was a basic, light-weight, easy-to-use iron. The Rowenta Professional Inox DE 811 had more features, but was more expensive and quite heavy. It was easy to use, but had a deep strip of metal around its bottom edge that got too hot to touch – not a good choice if you tend to feel your way around for buttons.

The following three irons were reasonably easy to use for people with poor grip: Rowenta Delphino DE 132; Rowenta Surfline Inox DE 313; and Ufesa PV 156 Vertinox 1500 – but the Ufesa also had deep metal around the bottom edge.

Generally the temperature markings were small and their colour contrast against the background varied: the stronger the contrast, the easier markings are to see. There were no tactile settings and none clicked into position, both of which would have been helpful.

Steam features

The more expensive irons tend to have more steam features.

- Extra steam. Most had this. You press a button for a short time to get extra steam. The buttons did not need much force.
- Variable steam. By using a

slider or rotary knob you could vary the steam output. One iron did this automatically. Some of the controls were fiddly or stiff to adjust.

- Vertical steaming. Helpful for use on hanging curtains. But using an iron this way strains your hand and arm.

- Water spray. All but one iron had a cold water spray button for dampening fabric. Most were light to press.

We rated markings on the steam controls for how easy they were to see. Once you know what they do and their position, these labels are less important.

Handling and descaling

All the irons had reasonably comfortable handles. None became uncomfortably hot. We also checked the irons for balance during use.

Descaling can be a fiddly job, but is important because scale can build up, particularly in a hard water area, and stop the iron steaming. Follow the instructions.

Buying guide

If you have strength, gripping and arm movement problems, ironing is likely to be a chore you avoid. The features you probably look for – comfortable handle, ease of gripping and using the controls – were pretty good on these irons compared with other appliances we have tested.

But if you are visually impaired, iron manufacturers should be doing more to help you. Overall, the irons scored poorly on visible markings, labels or water level indicators.



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ENDOOLITE

Cando certainly can

Contemporary dance company CandoCo recently performed their new work, *Out of Here*, at Manchester's Royal Northern College of Music.

It explores the desire to experience life directly, rather than through books, charting the links between fear and longing, and the need for security and freedom.

We see a man sitting on the stage, poring over a large man crumpled on the floor. In one hand he turns a golden ring, while in a notebook he jots down his observations. All is silent. From a hidden crevice in the notebook, a hand emerges and clasps the ring. As the man falls back in surprise, the book

rises up like a landscape, lifting him into the air and setting him down with the other dancers on a path of new experiences.

On a mythical journey through time the dancers experience natural disasters, the chaos of the modern world, and the span of human emotion.

As the dancers speed from one millennium to the next, the appearance of a distant light serves to remind us that there is much we still do not understand "out there". Finally, exhausted by their adventures, the dancers collapse into sleep.

CandoCo's performance is spellbinding. Their energy and depth of the emotion are utterly convincing. With



minimal props and beautiful lighting, this is a truly great

piece of dramatic dance.

Libby Cross

Film

Michael Turner

U-Turn



U-Turn finds Bobby Copper (Sean Penn) stranded in the small town of Superior, in the middle of the Arizona Desert.

His expectation of a two hour stop while the mechanic repairs his car is soon confounded, as he becomes caught up in twisting intrigues that turn into a nightmare from which there seems to be no escape.

The dream-like quality of the film is heightened by the surreal feel of the town.

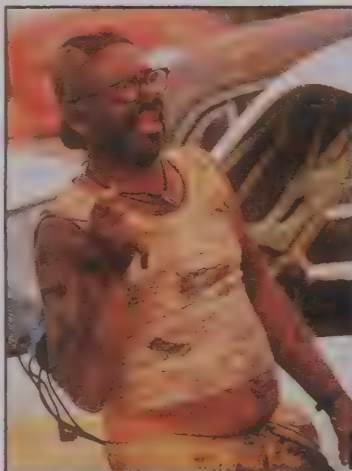
Along with the inevitable heat and dust of the desert setting, director Oliver Stone uses a considerable amount of disability imagery to highlight the decay and decadence of Superior.

Foremost in this is a blind native American, who is not even given a name (though his guide dog is). Using both blindness and a native American, Stone cashes in on two stereotypes for the price of one, and endows his character with mystic wisdom.

This character is played by Jon Voight, who won an Oscar for his role as a disabled Vietnam veteran in *Coming Home*, back in 1978. Voight is neither blind nor native

American, so why he was chosen for the role is a mystery, though it seems likely that performers from these backgrounds would have more integrity than to play this part.

Visual impairment is also used to ridicule the mechanic, Darrell (Billy Bob Thornton)



(below), who is responsible for Bobby's delay in Superior.

Darrell is crudely set up as a "country hick", with his impairment signified by thick lensed glasses. This humour has all the subtlety and sophistication of Benny Hill.

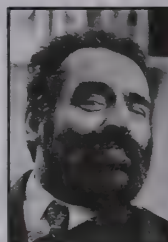
This is all disappointing coming from Oliver Stone, the director previously known for putting "macho" into being liberal, with his political epics, and being the director of one of the best portrayals of disability to come out of American cinema, *Born on the Fourth of July*.

While *U-Turn* feels fresh and energetic, it is derivative of many other films. Its use of stereotypes of disabled people gives clear indication that this is a film of style, not substance.

Television

Chris Davies

A production that caught my eye was *Our Mutual Friend*, a four-part BBC drama series, with disabled characters.



The problem is that Dickens layered so many factors of personality and situation on top of each other, one was hardly aware that there were disabled characters in the story. Still, this was a great production, even though it managed to get away with casting non-disabled actors in disabled roles.

There is, however, something better on the horizon – *The Unknown Soldier* (starting 28 April, Carlton), which casts around 25 disabled actors in the roles of wounded soldiers. (See page 18-19 for details).

Good news – *The Vibe* (Channel 4) has finished. Better news – *Sign On* is returning. Bad news – *Sign On* will only return for three programmes. Worst news – *The Vibe* is to return for a full series. The children in *The Vibe* behave overtly childish. Do producers think pathetic humour is what children laugh at? If so, what does it say about this generation of deaf and hearing children? The problem is it also tries to inform, but does not spend enough time doing so.

Give children a junior version of *Sign On* and see how it works.

Distant Sisters (Verse for two)

Art which stimulates desire to know more about art often achieves greatness. Common Ground Sign Dance Theatre's latest performance, *Distant Sisters*, left me thirsting for knowledge of Frieda Kahlo and Marilyn Monroe.

Based on the "inner landscapes" of these two women, an incongruous plot brings them together, revealing their

dramatic similarities and dignity.

Both women were unintentionally childless and their lives were closely linked with their work.

Frieda Kahlo (played by Isolte Avilas), a Mexican artist who became disabled at 18, began to paint from her hospital bed. She evoked the tenderness and cruelty of hope and love in her work.

Marilyn Monroe (played by Denise Armstrong), also had a

troubled youth, moving between institutions. Her film roles hid her intelligence, but did expose her sensuality and frailty. Both women experienced profound loneliness and depression.

The interaction of these roles was fascinating: Monroe's spirit clasped in her soft pout and the passionate Latin savagery of Kahlo. The wit, cynicism, and anguish of both were evident.

It was hard to see where Monroe's expressiveness ended and signing began. Her "neediness" and Kahlo's cynical dismissal of Monroe's support combusted as they accepted their similarities. Avilas' Latin vibrancy juxtaposed well with the softness of Armstrong. The soulful saxophone of Dave Praties, and the almost Moorish voice of Avilas, gave this multimedia feast an underlying rhythm. Common Ground showed that our lives' boundaries are those of other people's perceptions. I can only hope that this will, in time, encourage a more integrated audience.

Sue Vass

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USA

'Laura can feel equal to her young brothers'

Book Track is a scheme run by our county council which is designed to encourage wider reading. It is open to all children, and the idea is that, when they return a library book they have read, the librarian will ask questions about it to make sure it has been understood. As an incentive badges are awarded after 10, 25, 50, 75 and 100 books have been completed.

Such a project would seem easy for a non-disabled child to cope with. But would it appeal to my 16-year-old daughter Laura? She is physically disabled, visually impaired, has no speech and has learning difficulties. Despite this, her teacher at Downham Special School in Plymstock, Devon, was keen for us to have a go. And Laura herself certainly wanted to.

So each week Laura and I visited the library to choose a book. We started off with simple short stories and read them several times over. I then worded questions in such a way that Laura could answer "yes" by smiling or "no" by pressing a switch on her aid.

We soon reached the first badge for 25 stories, and went on from there. Gradually the stories increased in length and complexity, and more and more often I was only having to read them once. Laura also used audio cassettes.

We were all amazed at how much she understood and remembers. I am proud to say she has now reached the ultimate goal of receiving her gold badge for 100 books, some 18 months after starting.

I am certain this experience has increased her self-esteem. Her story has already appeared in the local press, and I like to think it has raised awareness among others of what she can do, and encouraged conversation where before people might not have spoken to her. She can feel equal to her two younger brothers Martin and Robert who are also gold badge Booktrackers. They now read to her sometimes.

Of course, Laura's teacher has also helped her win several brownie badges, one of which is "booklover". But that is another story...

A scheme in a local library has helped Laura Hills become more confident and reveal her abilities. Mum Rachel reports



The power of words: Laura and Rachel laugh together over a book

NIC RANDALL

It's good news! The Hyundai Accent Coupé 1.3i 3-door now has an automatic gearbox and power-assisted steering option.

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Accent Coupé 1.3i (manual) at £7,599 and Accent Coupé 1.3i (automatic) at £8,799, both on the road including 12 months Road Fund Licence.
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Book Track is a scheme being run by Devon County Council. Other counties run similar schemes. Contact your local library for details.



Arch inventor backs Innovations



Trevor Baylis OBE, famous for his invention of the BayGen wind-up radio, has pledged his support for the Innovations initiative at Naidex Care Management in June.

"I fully support the idea and

shall be coming along to meet people during the show," he said.

Mary Wilkinson, editor of *Disability Now*, which is sponsoring Innovations, said: "We are delighted that Trevor has accepted. Who better to inspire other inventors?"

Innovations will give inventors and designers the chance to show off their new ideas for aids and equipment for disabled people. It is not open to people whose products are already in production or sold commercially.

Trevor Baylis' interest in equipment for disabled people started with the Orange Aids project. Now he is setting up an Academy for Inventors that will support and encourage them, protect their ideas, and arrange auctions to ensure their ideas are sold to the highest bidder.

The academy will include social as well as commercial inventions.

Trevor warns that inventors and designers planning to exhibit at Innovations must act ahead of time to protect their inventions if they intend to sell them commercially.

The Patent Office says that disclosure or exhibition of a new product without taking out a patent or registering your design first can jeopardise the chance of securing protection.

Once you have shown your invention to anyone else without their agreeing in advance to keep the information private, then, according to UK law, you are not entitled to obtain a patent or a registered design for what is now public.

Potential exhibitors should contact one of these organisations:

- Their local patent agent – The Chartered Institute of Patent Agents has a directory (tel: 0171-405 9450)
- The Patent Office central enquiry unit, which has free literature and gives general advice (tel: 0645-500 505 local rate call)
- The Institute of Patentees and Inventors (tel: 0171-434 1818)
- Your local Business Link, the Government's one-stop advice centre for small business, to find the nearest office (tel: 0345-567 7654 local rate call).

For more information and an Innovations application form, contact Sandie McCoubrey at Naidex Care Management, tel: 0181-910 7959.

DisabilityNOW

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- non-inflammatory illness of the peripheral nerves (polyneuropathy)
- insufficient physical exercise
- oedemas
- osteoporosis
- stiffness of the joints

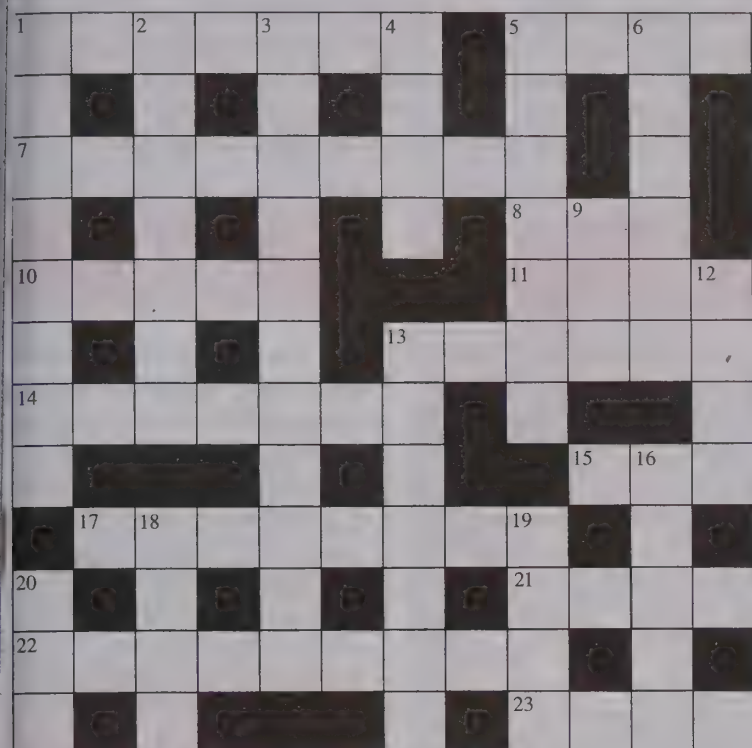
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DN's crossword

Answers on page 28 COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



ACROSS

1. Show of courage (7)
5. American singer/film star (4)
7. Play tunic (anag)
8. Globe (3)
10. African country (5)
11. Regulation (4)
13. Envied (anag)
14. Kettledrums (7)
15. Evidence of a holiday? (3)
17. One of King Arthur's knights (8)
21. Fierce giant (4)
22. Cleaning glass or metal, for example (9)

23. Italian river (4)

DOWN

1. Disabled politician (8)
2. Not many (anag)
3. Papers a cane (anag)
4. upon a time (4)
5. Unit of energy from food (7)
6. Facilitate (6)
9. Move quickly (3)
12. Biblical paradise (4)
13. Evil person (7)
16. Scottish island (5)
18. Wartime friend (4)
19. Roman garment (4)
20. Copy or mock (3)

Your stars



By DN's astrologer
Marion Stanton

TAURUS (21 Apr-21 May)

★ You will be focusing on your own immediate needs. Try to keep your cool around the 7th when Uranus squares the moon in your sign. Don't try any smooth talking before the 14th – it could end up in arguments. Try a little dream realisation around the 20th.

GEMINI (22 May-22 June)

★ May brings an opportunity for you to fuse your thinking and feeling sides as Venus moves into Gemini. An opportunity to review your relationships with family and friends arises, especially around the 9th. Things will be a little clearer from the 22nd.

CANCER (23 June-23 July)

★ This is not a time for action but for reflection. The square of Saturn and the opposition of Neptune to your sign will occupy your thoughts with how you want to build your dreams in a structured way. Sense could win out over sensibility this month.

LEO (24 July-23 Aug)

★ This month you are being challenged in many aspects of your life. You are looking for some long-term solutions that will lead to a change for the better. Use your natural optimism to help you overcome doubts which are, after all, only temporary.

VIRGO (24 Aug-23 Sept)

★ This is a time to express yourself. Mercury is in Taurus trining your sun. You will find it easier to get through to those all important people this month. Make hay while the sun shines. Don't let opportunities slip through your fingers.

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)

★ It's a quiet month for most Librans. You could spend some time thinking about the structures you want to build-up for yourself that will bring some long-term benefit.

SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)

★ With Venus, the sun and Mercury opposing your sun this month, you would do well to lie low for a while or arguments could flare up all around you. If you want to try and change the world, now is the time to make plans rather than going out to do it.

SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)

★ A stressful start to the month could convert to outright confrontation unless you give yourself a bit of space

and time to calm down. Relax and allow yourself to think in the long-term because it will pay dividends later.

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)

★ Use the first half of May, when Venus, the sun and Mercury are in your favour, to communicate your needs, and you should get the desired response. If there's a certain someone you've been hoping to get closer to, now is the time to make your move.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)

★ If you feel frustrated in the first two weeks of May, don't despair. You should be in a better position to further your aims in the following weeks. Save negotiations with loved ones until after the 11th.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 March)

★ A little bit of inspiration from a connection between your sun and Mercury, and Venus and the sun in Taurus, could help you to finally write that last section of the novel or song, or finish the creative project you are working on. Try and get it done early in the month.

ARIES (21 Mar-20 Apr)

★ Things might seem a bit flat after last month's excitements. Bide your time at the start of the month. Arians interested in the arts could find that their ideas come to fruition in the last week or two of May.

Information

The Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education has produced radio-style documentary tapes. The *Inclusive in Action* tape and guidebook is for training teachers and gives the experiences of children in six English schools. £20 including p&p, (cheques payable to CSIE), from CSIE, 1 Redland Close, Elm Lane, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UE, tel: 0117-923 8450, fax: 0117-923 8460.

The International Penfriends Club enables people to make contact with others all over the world, whether you want to write to someone similar to yourself, or someone completely different. All people correspond in English so there are no language barriers. Write to Mrs Hardy, enclosing an SAE, 55 Green Leys, St Ives, Cambs PE17 4SB.

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, is holding talks for deaf visitors: *Power of the Poster*, 11 May at 2pm (with BSL interpreter), *Historic Photography*, 3 June at 11am and 12.30pm, and the *Raphael Cartoons*, 20 June at 2pm. Disabled people with one carer

each admitted free. Call Imogen Stewart, tel: 0171-938 8634.

The RNIB has launched a leisure information service for blind and partially sighted people in the UK. Based at RNIB Education Centre North, Leeds, it gives information about activities and workshops taking place around the country. Information from Angela Dinning, tel: 0113-274 8855.

Venus – a charity working to empower and assist young women living in the Sefton area

of Merseyside wants to hear from disabled women, aged 15-25, who want to join a new drama group meeting at an accessible centre. Contact April Bird, tel: 0151-260 2753.

Artsline's Multicultural Project has produced *London's Multicultural Access Guide* giving disabled access information with a cultural focus. The key to the guide has been translated into 12 languages. Order forms from Meena Jafarey, Artsline, 54 Chalton Street, London NW1 1HS, tel: 0171-388 2474.

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Fax: 01254 389992

Bexley and Greenwich Health Authority has produced *What should I do?*, a patient education programme on minor illness. It covers treatments, who to contact and when. It is

available in seven languages, braille, large print and on cassette. Contact Kirsty Maguire, RTFB Publishing, Building 2, Shamrock Quay, Southampton SO14 5QL, tel: (01703) 229041.



Introducing the new **Mercedes Benz Vito** wheelchair accessible people carrier. High quality with easy access and excellent visibility.

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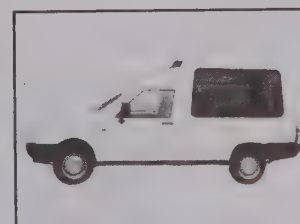
- 5 seats + one wheelchair • 4 seats + two wheelchairs

Features include:

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For advice and information on conversion and motability, contact David Vooght, G&M Coachwork, Teign Valley, Trusham, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 0NX
Tel: 01626 853050

Disability Scotland's 4th Mobility Roadshow will be at the Royal Highland Centre, Ingleston, 28-30 May.

Outside, take the chance to test cars, MPVs, camper vans and motorcycles on the Ingleston test track (bring your driving licence). Inside, take a look at wheelchairs and accessories, holiday and travel stands or find information on sport and leisure.

If you have difficulty arranging transport to the Roadshow, contact the Roadshow desk, tel/minicom: 0131-229 8632, and they will try to link you into community transport coming from your area.

West Midlands Mobility Roadshow will be at Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA), Nuneaton, Warwickshire (A5 between Hinkley and Atherstone), 12-14 June.

This free show (no tickets required), will feature over 90 percent of car manufacturers on the mobility scheme, such as Ford, Volkswagen and Vauxhall. Sixty vehicles will be available for test driving on the two tracks (bring your driving licence), and there will be car adaptations, accessible vehicles, charities, as well as the latest range of electric and self-powered wheelchairs and scooters.

Information from DMP Promotions, tel: (01226) 386677, fax: (01226) 390777.

Below is DN's third website list. If you want your organisation's site included - it can also go on the new "links" page of our website - send the name and address to Damien Vessey, address on page 3.

CHARITIES

Arthritis Link:

<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~pgardiner/charities.htm>

Breast Cancer Care:

<http://www.easynet.co.uk/aware/contacts/bccare>

British Diabetic Association:

<http://www.pavilion.co.uk/diabetic>

British Epilepsy Association:

<http://www.epilepsy.org.uk>

British Polio Fellowship:

<http://www.healthworks.co.uk/hw/orgs/polio.html>

Cystic Fibrosis Trust:

<http://www.child-health.dundee.ac.uk/cf-server/cftrust>

John Grooms Association for Disabled People:

<http://www.johngrooms.org.uk>

Muscular Dystrophy Group:

<http://www.sonnet.co.uk/muscular-dystrophy>

Muscular Dystrophy Links:

<http://ireland.iol.ie/~mdi/mdalinks.html>

Multiple Sclerosis Society:

<http://www.mssociety.org.uk>

National Asthma Campaign:

<http://www.amrc.org.uk/nac.htm>

Samaritans:

<http://www.samaritans.org.uk>

Spinal Injuries Association:

<http://jgrweb.com/sia>

INFORMATION

Disability Rights Task Force:

<http://www.disability.gov.uk>

Gateshead Council on Disability:

<http://www.disabilitygateshead.org.uk>

Self-help and Support Groups:

<http://www.patient.org.uk>

What's on

Delyn and Deeside Disabled Sports Club hold their 10th Annual Games at Deeside Leisure Centre, 6 June, 10am-4pm. Disabled competitors (national and international), and spectators welcome. For further details, tel: (01352) 720834.

The Eastern Region Disability Equipment Exhibition will be held in Norwich, 3-4 June and in Colchester, 23-24 September. It is aimed at disabled people, carers, and professionals, and will display all the latest equipment and products. Stand space still available. For information, tel: (01508) 470200.

The RNIB are holding a free one-day conference for Asian families, in the West Midlands Exhall Grange School, Ash Green, Coventry, 6 June, 10am-3pm. It will include exhibitions, workshops and a crèche. Contact Anita Purwaha, Information Development officer, RNIB Asian Families Project, tel: (01203) 369559.



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(Supported by The Treloar Trust, Registered Charity 307103 which also supports a further education college on a separate site).

Help

Lily Alger and Elaine Jones need people to help sponsor an exhibition of their painting and poetry at Bruce Castle Park. Donations go towards framing and displaying costs. Anyone interested, please write to Lily and Elaine, 11 Stockton Road, Tottenham, London N17 7HX.

Look out for

Water Wings, a theatrical performance for and by people with learning difficulties, tours in May and June in special schools, with extra performances at The Point Dance and Arts Centre, Southampton, 20 May and the Mercury Theatre, Colchester, 11-12 June. Information from Sally Ann Lycett, tel: (01424) 225140.

Sound Sense, the national development agency for community music, holds an event/conference, *Evolving Links*, 19-21 June, in Bangor, which will include debate on democracy in music. Details from Sound Sense, tel: (01449) 736287.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. Bravado 5. Cher 7. Untypical 8. Orb 10. Kenya 11. Rule 13. Veined 14. Timpani 15. Tan 17. Lancelot 21. Ogre 22. Polishing 23. Arno
DOWN: 1. Blunkett 2. Antonym 3. Appearances 4. Once 5. Calorie 6. Enable 9. Run 12. Eden 13. Villain 16. Arran 18. Ally 19. Toga 20. Ape

Video top five

- AIR FORCE ONE** (Buena Vista): Harrison Ford in hijack hijinks.
 - MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING** (Columbia Tristar): Julia Roberts' matrimonial mish-mash.
 - CONTACT** (Warner): Jodie Foster meets some martians.
 - EVENT HORIZON** (CIC): Yet more alien action.
 - MEN IN BLACK** (Columbia Tristar): Smooth suits still putting in the boot.
- Chart supplied by MIRB.
Closed captions-video with word-for-word captions.

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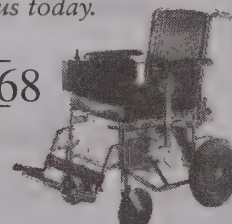
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If it hasn't got the mark behind it,
you won't have us behind you.

BSTA

Bright ideas

Dan Batten tries out some new products aimed at making life that little bit easier...



tion in art classes, where he noticed wheelchair users were unable to participate fully due to awkward table shapes. The table collapses, making it easy to transport, and is already being used in some Mencap residential homes. For further information, contact Fred Lees, M&D Artists Easels and Accessories, tel: 0191-428 3439.



The Building Centre, London, is now hosting an exhibition with universal access as the theme.

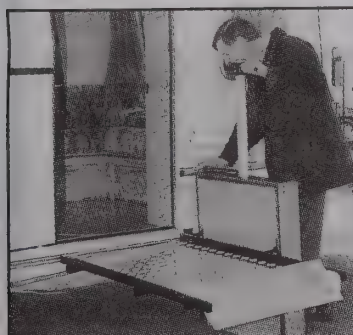
On display are a shower room (above) featuring a shower seat with arms, a toilet with

handrails, and a washbasin which can be raised or lowered to suit the user's height. Also to be seen are a public access chair lift, and a very bright kitchen with low level sink and work-tops. The Building Centre, tel: 0171-637 1022.

If you have any inventions or useful tips you would like Dan to cast his eye over, send them to him at the address on page 3, or tel: 0171-619 7323.



The Netti (above) and Netti Mini are two new wheelchairs from Radcliffe, for adults and children respectively, which can "grow" with the user. Standard features include a padded seat, backrest cushions, and a 40 degree backrest tilt on the Netti. Optional extras include a flexible backrest with sides. For further information, contact Radcliffe Rehabilitation Services, tel: (01280) 700 256.



GST systems have two new portable lifts. The Stand On can be secured to places such as a door frame, where larger steps can be a problem. The wheelchair lift (above) is used in the same way on vehicles such as caravans. The lifts are secured with brackets which can be unfastened, enabling them to be moved. Details from GST systems, tel: (01302) 752223.

Good news for wheelchair user artists – Fred Lees has invented an adaptable table (below), to allow easy access and use by artists. The invention came about through Fred's participa-



FREE ENTRY

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and much, much more....

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Crèche,
and much, much more...*

Disability Now would like to apologise for not including much lineage advertising in the April issue. This was due to unexpected advertising pressure in the issue. To try and print as much lineage advertising as possible, we are not including our advert form. If you would like to place an advert, please tel: 0171-619 7329 for a form.

Personal

I AM A DISABLED lady who uses a wheelchair. I seek a kind, caring male for penpal friendship, who enjoys life, could be disabled or not, and who can drive. Please write with photograph, which I will return, and be pleasantly suprised. Letters from anywhere welcome. Box No. 192

WIDOW, NOT YOUNG (51), not thin, not a raving beauty, and I smoke. But I am fun to be with, have a gsoh and a great personality, or so I'm told. I drive, have my own house, car and will travel. I love all kinds of music, travelling, and eating in/out – I'm a fair cook. I'm disabled with oesteo-arthritis, and so walk with crutches. I'm lonely, loyal and honest, and have a lot of love to give to the right person. There must be someone out there who doesn't want just a 'dolly bird'. For friendship or more, please write to me. Box No. 193

HI, I AM TOM. I'm 24 years old and have cp. I am caring, loving and have a gsoh. I have a car. I follow football, snooker and bowls and like rock music. I am looking for a lady, aged 19-25, who's caring and loving, for friendship/relationship. I enjoy going out for a drink but don't mind staying in. I use a wheelchair outdoors but a stick indoors. Box No. 194

MALE, 39, 6FT tall, able bodied living in the country. I enjoy travelling abroad, the countryside, going to the theatre and most sports. I have a gsoh and am kind, loving and romantic. I wltm an able bodied or disabled lady who's an active wheelchair user or amputee, aged 30-38, for friendship/relationship. Box No. 195

MALE, 6FT, 26 years of age with cp. I have my own business of typesetting and litho printing. My interests are driving, pool, music, socialising and antique collecting. I am also an animal lover. I'm seeking a female for friendship, disabled or non-disabled, with a view to possible relationship. Box No. 196

COMPASSIONATE, OPTIMISTIC, good looking graduate, late 30s, slightly disabled. Has own house, is cheerful and into alternative therapies, music, cinema etc. Searching for cheerful, feminine soulmate. Nationality no barrier, but being a "Leo" would be. Box No. 197

MALE, 35, LIVING in Yorkshire, wltm nice lady, disabled or not. I'm a wheelchair user, mobile and independent with own home, and car and many interests. I'm looking for a friend, possible life partner, hopefully someone in caring profession. All replies responded to. Box No. 198

CHAP, 37, SUFFERING from longstanding chronic arthritis. Enjoys history – probably lives too much in the 1930s. Likes classical music and novels. Takes a great interest in current affairs and would like to make contact with an interesting lady. Please write. Box No. 199

YOUNG MAN, PEOPLE say I look like that chef, Woz. I have arthritis. Are you a woman, 25-35, into conversation, cinema, anything Spanish, theatre, opera, the environment and believe in the social model of disability. If you like the above and are romantic, hedonistic and understand Cancerians, then contact me for friendship and/or relationship. Box No. 200

DID YOU GO to Deme Park, Fectonbridge, Kent. If so, please get in touch with me as I wish to share my experiences with the girls who were there. The years that I am interested in are October 1964 to July 1966. Box No. 201

CARDIFF MAN, AGE 30+. Very good looking. Fit, smart, slim build and well dressed. Wltm a lady, any disability for romance. My disability is that I am bald and it can be a problem to find a lady in my life. Please write. Box No. 202

34 YEAR OLD broad-minded male. Has own flat, car and job. Varied interests including computing, photography, tv, theatre, cinema and quiet times in. Wheelchair user, seeks like-minded female for friendship/relationship. North Worcestershire preferred. Non-smokers please. Box No. 203

I AM DARREN. I am 30 years old and would love to hear from any single girls, age 23-33, who, like me, are epileptic fit sufferers. I love travelling, music and a laugh. I also like to go for a drink. I'm

seeking anyone like me who would like friendship. Must live in London area. Box No. 204

COUNTRY LOVING MALE, 33, with back disability due to Moto Cross accident. Also waiting for a hearing aid. Into computers, photography and travel. Looking for a lady, preferably in the south west. Go on – post me a note, I will answer. Box No. 205

MY NAME IS Michael. I am a christian astrologer (not professional). I suffer from a rare type of dyslexia. I am long-term unemployed, but own my own house. My interests are history, old-time dancing, piano and keyboard playing, taking newspaper cuttings and steam engines. I am a young looking 48 and would like to meet a lady perhaps a good deal younger. I am 6ft tall and slim. I live near Bishop's Stortford. Box No. 206

MALE, 36, INDEPENDENT wheelchair user. Likes music, cinema, tv (ER and X Files). Currently studying for a degree. Looking for an independent, disabled woman who is into politics, honesty and romance. Box No. 207

A LADY, 45, with cp and partially deaf. I am a disabled rider, belonging to RDA. I would like to correspond with/meet genuine, caring men with similar disabilities. I have other hobbies. Must be able to drive. Wiltshire or Hampshire area. Box No. 208

35 YEAR OLD male with mild learning disability seeks male penfriend aged 20 to 35 with a learning disability who plays football for a learning disabled football team. Box No. 209

I AM AN attractive, intelligent, affectionate, happy, talkative, considerate man in his late 30s. I have a nice home, great personality and am a very loving person. I am also slightly disabled. I would love to meet a happy, warm, affectionate, feminine lady to share my contentment and happiness with. She would possibly be between 30-43, petite (I am 5ft 10in) and a happy person. The right person could be anyone. Please reply. Box No. 210

GOODLOOKING, LIVELY 29 year old with gsoh. Enjoys socialising, pubs, theatre and cinema. Interested in computers, art and graphics. I have cp. I'm looking for friendship, possible relationship. Box No. 211

SINGLE MALE, 32 years old seeks 21-30 year old female companion for friendship. She should be caring, friendly and understanding. I earlier had a mental health problem but now am completely recovered. My hobbies include squash, swimming, watching movies and going to the gymnasium. Box No. 212

30 YEAR OLD, blue-eyed brunette with mild ms would like to meet a male for friendship etc. I find walking for long distances tiring but try not to let this affect my life too much. I love cinema, music, eating out, pubs – all the usual things. So go on, be brave, get in touch. Box No. 213

MAN, 38, HAS cp. Interested in sporting activities and music. A car driver. I would like to meet a lady. Also would like to get in touch with people who would be intersted in going on holiday with me, home or abroad. Box No. 214

Wanted

TWO CONTROL BOXES. Joystick and secondary control in working condition for 1987 Everest Jennings Wayfarer out-door wheelchair. Please contact Mick Benford asap, tel: (01536) 523591.

Accommodation

HOUSE FOR SALE. Three bedroom semi in Chorlton, Manchester. Ramps, Wessex lift, Apollo bath. Conservatory, shed with power supply. Attractive garden. £80,000. Tel: 0161-881 4660.

For sale

MEYRA SPRINT CHAIR. Outdoor use. Has factory fitted running lights, indicators and horn. As new. New cost £4,800. First reasonable offer accepted. Tel: (01642) 453848.

POWES MARK 2 LEG exerciser. New cost £675. Portable comode, £90. Hardly used. Offers welcome. Tel: 0181-909 1280.

NISSAN PRIMERA 2.0. Auto, red, power assisted steering, electric windows, sun-

roof, fsh. 34,000 miles. Not converted, £5,995 ono. Tel: 0151-201 9665 (South Wirral).

CHAIRMAN ASTRA 1987, 1.6, auto. Rear hydraulic lowering system for wheelchair passenger. Page hand controls. £3,750. Tel: (01442) 842001 (Herts).

PASSENGER SEAT NEARLY new. Swivels 90 degrees. Fits Maestro or Montego. Used once, £250 ono. Tel: 0181-866 5197.

ELECTRIC RISER/RECLINER chair with massage unit. Beige/rose. Only 5 months use. Cost £1,500, will accept £800 ono. Tel: 0181-427 2301 (Harrow).

AJ WAY MULTI 6 electric armchair. Excellent condition. Three years old. Cost £1,700, accept £850. Also Elap rotating passenger seat, £250. Tel: (01223) 368211 (Cambridge).

NISSAN PRAIRIE E REG. White, front passenger wheelchair and lift conversion. Good condition, £3,000 ono. Tel: 0181-692 4170.

RENAULT EXTRA G REG with ramp. 1.4, petrol, manual, good condition. Driver, wheelchair plus three. £3,000 or ono. Tel: (01703) 253998 (Southampton).

POWERTEC F40 BATTERY powered wheelchair and ramp with extras. Used three times. £2,300. Tel: 0181-890 1523.

ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR, Home & Away 15in model. Right hand control. Comes with charger. Cost £2,445, unused so £1,500. Tel: (01621) 828915.

NISSAN PRAIRIE 1.5. 1986, red. Brotherwood wheelchair conversion. Low mileage, vgc, £8,000 ono. Tel: (01162) 607856.

SUNRISE EC50 POWERCHAIR. Black leather, only been used three times. Spare battery and charger included in the asking price of £3,500 ono. Tel: 0181-672 6454.

LARK SHOPPER 4. One owner, little usage. Kerb climber, battery charger, regularly serviced. New cost £2,300, accept £750 ono. Tel: 0181-384 4598.

QED CHILD'S ELECTRIC wheelchair. Red, 2 years old. Elevating seat, good condition, well maintained. Cost £6,000. Asking £2,000 ono. Possible delivery. Tel: (01491) 612815 (Oxon).

GAZELLE STANDING FRAME suit child 7-11 years old. Size 2, immaculate. Cost £1,000, asking £600 ono. Possible delivery. Tel: (01491) 612815 (Oxon).

SUNRISE MEDICAL POWERTEC F40 electric wheelchair. Kerb climber, lumbar support. 16in seat, charger. Excellent condition, £1,200 ono. Tel: (01273) 685739 or 0973-419 746.

FIAT FIORINO 1.4, petrol. Universal Mobility conversion. Seats four plus passenger in wheelchair with ramp and winch. N reg, 11,000 miles, AA inspected May 1997. £8,999. Tel: (01293) 871777.

PEUGEOT 405 ESTATE. White, 92k, auto, 50k. With chair, hoist, power assisted steering and all usual extras. £6,000 ono. Tel: (01942) 272268 (Wigan).

ADJUSTAMATIC ELECTRIC BED, good condition, £450. Armchair with electric recline, lift and tilt, good condition, £395. Can arrange delivery. Tel: (01689) 829186.

CONSTABLES CARCHAIR SYSTEM with powered wheelchair. Mint condition, £3,000 ono. Tel: (01634) 231756.

PEUGEOT 205 G REG. Auto, hand controls, 5-door. Rear sliding door and wheelchair hoist passenger side. 46,000 miles, MOT. £4,500 ono. Tel: 0181-851 7978 (after 6pm).

NISSAN PRAIRIE J REG. Brotherwood swivel seat, new engine. Good condition, MOT to October. £4,500. Tel: (01438) 813658.

FORD TRANSIT 80. P reg, 2.5 turbo diesel. Only 1,400 miles. Remote power ramp, hand controls, many extras. Perfect disabled vehicle. £15,000 ono. Tel: (01732) 364162 (evenings).

SUNRISE F40 ELECTRIC wheelchair. Only been used inside. Excellent value at £1,300 ono. Could deliver. Tel: (01746) 789632 (Shropshire).

FORD ESCORT CHAIRMAN, F reg. Lowering suspension. 52,000 miles, MOT to December. Tel: (01438) 813658.

SUNTEC WHEELCHAIR and Samson controlled powerpack. Hardly used. New cost £2,012 now £1,200. Tel: (01255) 241288 (Essex).

QUICKIE GPV LIGHTWEIGHT wheelchair. Black rigid frame with tapered footrest. 15x15in seat, 12-16in adjustable folding backrest. Vgc, used as spare. Cost £1,300, will accept £550. Tel: 0115-916 5687 (Nottingham).

CHRYSLER VOYAGER CHAIRMAN. 1991, auto. Gowring hydraulics, rear entry. Excellent condition, luxurious interior. £9,500 ono. Tel: (01268) 416162.

BEC STERLING XL SCOOTER. 1992, immaculate condition, £650. Tel: (01372) 458681.

AUSTIN METRO CHAIRMAN. F reg, automatic, 35k miles, MOT, good condition. £3,800 ono. Tel: 0181-904 4803 (evenings).

TOP QUALITY SWEDE Cross folding wheelchair. Adaptable to wide range of disabilities. Frame width 18in, seat depth 14-16in, rear wheels 24in, quick release, £450. Pair of aluminium channel ramps, 52.25in, £50. Tel: 0121-446 5453.

VESSA VITESSA 2000 electric wheelchair, good condition. £750 ono. Tel: 0181-904 4803 (evenings).

HNE HARRIER ELECTRIC wheelchair, good condition. £1,500 ono. Tel: 0181-904 4803 (evenings).

STAINLESS STEEL SWIVEL bathchair. Cost £190, accept £100. Also wheel-in showerchair, £60. Tel: (01525) 210346.

SARABEC LA200 LOOP pad system. Used once, £65. Tel: (01695) 573224 (Lancs).

HOIST FOR ESCORT estate car. Lifts up to 3 tonnes. Cost £600, sell for £290. Tel: (01460) 57303 (evenings, Somerset).

WESSEX TRAVEL MASTER hoist (ceiling). As new, cost £1,700, sell for £600. Tel: 0114-269 3015.

ZAGOTEK FLEXISTAND MAJOR. Good condition with accessories. £175. Tel: 0115-925 1577.

LANDROVER DISCOVERY V8. Tail lift for wheelchair. Clamps; 7,000 miles; M reg. As new, £17,500. Tel: 0117-937 3528.

SUNRISE POWERTEC F40 electric wheelchair with charger. Little use, in good condition, £800 ono. Tel: 0171-637 1454.

VW CARAVELLE GL (1994). 2.5 petrol, automatic. Cruise control, underfloor lift, hand controls, power steering, swivel seats. Serviced and MOT. Beautiful, £14,995. Tel: 0117-955 2194.

SUNRISE MEDICAL 3-WHEEL scooter. Little used. Cost £1,600, will accept £600 ono. Tel: (01784) 59284 or (01784) 423308.

SUNRISE MEDICAL MIDI 4 electric buggy. Puncture proof tyres. One year old,

For sale

Continued on page 31

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excellent condition with charger and accessories. New cost £2,200, accept £1,600 ono. Tel: 0181-941 1310 (9-10pm).

PARKER RECLINING BATH, giving easy access for disabled, £300. Tel: 0181-688 5475 (Croydon).

FIAT FIORINO A REG. 52,000 miles. Good condition, rear ramp conversion for wheelchair. £600. Tel: (01382) 644361.

SYMMETRIKIT EASYCHAIR. As new, light green. Suit ages 4-10. £250 ono. Tel: (01423) 324316.

SMIRTHWAITE PLINTH, 5ft by 5ft 5in, £30. Ladderback chair, 32in, £20. BBC Master computer, drive, monitor, printer, £60. Concept keyboard, £30. Tel: (01798) 865465.

TENDER CARE LARGE PUSHCHAIR with raincover. Fold-away, footrest, side-supports, reclining. Suit child aged up to 9 years. Hardly used. Cost £530, accept £250. Tel: (01788) 817305 (Rugby).

AMPLIVOX ULTRATONE VIENNATONE 314 hearing aid glasses for both ears. As new, £1,000 ono. Tel: (01708) 375356.

ALEXIS INDOOR/OUTDOOR powered wheelchair. Upholstered, headrest. Cost £3,000, will accept £1,750. Tel: 0161-881 4660.

WINSFORD AUTOMATIC RECLINER. Neutral colour. New cost £895, offers around £400. Single Dreamland elecover blanket. Offers please. Tel: (01344) 627036.

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Recruitment (continued on pages 32, 33, 34)

BREAKTHROUGH UK LTD

is an exciting new initiative controlled by disabled people and aiming to provide training, employment and independent living support to disabled people with a range of impairments.

It is a Company Registered by Guarantee, established by Manchester City Council Social Services Department and is supported by local voluntary and private sector agencies.

We are now recruiting for the following core and project staff:

Finance and New Ventures Manager:	£20,000app
Administrator:	£15,759
Secretary:	£13,000
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The training scheme:

Senior training Officer:	£15,759
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Training Support Assistants:	£11,157

Employment Support:

Senior Marketing Officer:	£15,758
Marketing Officer:	£13,920
Employment Support Assistants:	£12,171

Suitably qualified disabled people will be interviewed first for these posts.

The Finance and New Ventures Manager will report to the Board of Directors, through the Chief Executive, and will be responsible for overseeing the finances, developing and maintaining computerised management information systems, managing the administrator and will be involved in the development of new ventures.

The Administrator will run the offices and ensure that administration support is provided to the projects.

The Secretary will support the Chief Executive, Operations Manager, and Finance and New Ventures Manager.

The Training Scheme

operates on a variety of sites to simulate varied working environments; the majority of current trainees are people with learning difficulties; this will vary in the future. The Senior Training Officer will have management responsibility for the Training Team; along with the Training Officer they will be responsible for the design and monitoring of training to develop work-related skills. The Support Assistants will work with trainees on a day-to-day basis to facilitate their development.

The Employment Support Scheme

aims to provide opportunities for people to progress towards paid, and voluntary, occupations. The Senior Marketing Officer will have management responsibility for the Team; along with the Marketing Officer they will contact and liaise with local employers to negotiate jobs and placements for disabled people. The Support Assistants will work with employers and disabled people, on a day-to-day basis, to assist and promote their success in the workplace.

No formal qualifications are required for any of these posts.

Relevant experience will be significant; all posts are 35 hours per week (pay award pending)

Please send an SAE for details to:
BREAKTHROUGH UK LTD, BEVC,
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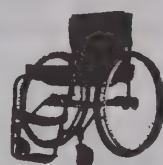
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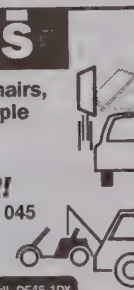
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Continued on page 32

Holidays

NAISH HOLIDAY VILLAGE: Clifftop park with "excellent" status. New Milton, Hampshire. Excellent site facilities within 100 yds. with indoor/outdoor pools; restaurant, bar, take-away. Fully equipped, two bedroom, fully wheelchair accessible log cabin accommodation. Sleeps 6, well furnished. Free club membership.

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A HOLIDAY IN CAMBRIDGE

Bridget's hostel provides holidays for people with a physical disability. Bridget's is five minutes from the town centre and from other major attractions in Cambridge. We have seven fully adapted single rooms, a large communal kitchen and living room, three specialised bathrooms/shower room and the possibility of part-time care. For this year it is expected that guests will bring their own carers. For more information and price guide, call Jenny Sandland on 01223 354312.

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Recruitment (continued on pages 33 and 34)

BBC Resources

Paid work experience opportunities for people with disabilities

BBC Resources is pleased to offer once again a number of subsidised work experience placements for people with disabilities, following the success of similar schemes in previous years.

The placements cover a wide range of skill areas and will be based within various departments at different locations in and around the London area and in Cardiff, Glasgow and Birmingham. Each placement will be for a period of up to twelve weeks and it is anticipated that most will commence from July/August 1998 or thereabouts.

Please note that only people with disabilities will be considered for these placements and candidates will have to undergo a selection process.

Details are also available on audio cassette if required.

For further details and an application form, please contact BBC Recruitment Services (quoting ref. 27734/DI) by May 13th on 0181-740 0005, Minicom 0181-225 9878. Alternatively, send a postcard to BBC Recruitment Services, PO Box 7000, London W12 8GJ, or e-mail recserv@bbc.co.uk quoting ref. 27734/DI and giving your full name and address. Application forms to be returned by May 16th.

You can also see this vacancy on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/jobs/e27734.shtml> and apply online from our world wide web site.



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Further information: Wendy Tyler, WECIL Ltd., Leinster Avenue, Knowle, Bristol BS4 1AR, tel: 0117-983 9839 (voice and minicom)

WECIL particularly encourages applications from under-represented groups (eg Black Disabled people, Disabled Lesbians and Gay Men).

WYE VALLEY *Specialising in Holidays for Disabled People*
Glorious valley & river views, 3 acres gardens, 3 lounges & conservatory. T.V./Radio all rooms. Menu choices. Physio, hairdresser. MINIBUS OUTINGS TO TINTERN, SYMOND'S YAT ETC. - TAKES WHEELCHAIRS - CAN ALSO COLLECT/RETURN TO YOUR HOME. Activities, entertainments. Rates from £235/week. (01594) 530581 for brochure etc. The Priory Res. Home, nr Tintern NPS 4TP

WINGED FELLOWSHIP TOURS
Overseas holidays for people with disabilities. Holland, Eire, Channel Islands, France, Switz, Norway, Czech, Majorca, USA etc. Prices include flights, travel in adapted vehicles, accessible accommodation, nurse/couriers. Also UK budget "Discovery" holidays. All destinations accessible. Brochure from Gary Day: 0171 833 4579 ext 122.

BARKING AND DAGENHAM INDEPENDENT LIVING AGENCY (ILA) 'CHOICES' PROJECT

WISHES TO APPOINT A CO-ORDINATOR

Salary £14,593 inc LW for a 25 hour week plus car mileage allowance

The 'Choices' Project is a new and exciting service offered by the ILA which aims to empower disabled people to access a wide range of resources, information and services to live independently within the community.

The post holder will promote the independent living opportunities the 'Choices' Project can provide by offering advice, information, support, advocacy and assistance to disabled people living in the community.

To do this, you must have a knowledge of people with a wide range of physical and sensory impairments, be able to recruit and manage staff and volunteers, manage administrative and financial tasks and work directly with disabled people in their own homes and in the community.

Our offices are fully accessible, you will have support from our Management Committee and complement our existing services.

Applications from disabled people are particularly welcomed.

Closing date: 22nd May 1998

Interviews week commencing 1st June 1998

For an application form and details of this exciting new Project, please contact Claire Meade at St George's Centre, St George's Road, Dagenham, Essex RM9 5JB. Tel: 0181-593 6677 and Minicom 0181-592 6684.

Creating opportunities with disabled people

DISABLED PEOPLE'S FORUM

LEONARD CHESHIRE

3 Development Workers (3 year contracts) £12,000 per annum for 21 hours a week (£20,000 pro rata)

1. London & South of England
2. Central England & Wales
3. North of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland

We require 3 disabled people to work as development workers across the UK to establish forums of disabled people in each of the 10 Leonard Cheshire regions, and to identify their training needs. You will work from home with administrative and management support from the project office, and will need to travel extensively across the regions you work in, and meet with service users in local services. You will have experience of development work facilitating user groups, setting up meetings, and negotiating user participation with service providers.

For application pack, available from 5th May, contact: Administrator, Leonard Cheshire Disabled People's Forum, Wyndhams, St. Joseph's Place, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1DD.

(Please state post you are interested in, and where you saw the advertisement).

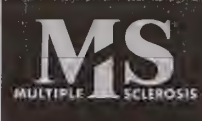
Fax: (01380) 721062

E-mail: uep@lcf.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 26th May 1998

Interviews: Post 1 - 5th June
Post 2 - 8th June
Post 3 - 9th June

Registered Charity No. 218186



The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The national charity for everyone affected by MS - working for better care and the eradication of MS.

We are looking for an independent individual to assist in organising support programmes for welfare volunteers and education programmes for health & social care professionals. Based in London, you will be working closely with our Services Development Officer and our Professional Education Officer who work from home in the Midlands and the North.

You will provide administrative support, act as a point of contact for enquiries, assist with education and training materials, and organise and take bookings for events.

Candidates must have excellent administrative skills, and experience of responding to enquiries and maintaining mailing lists/databases. WP skills and a good telephone manner are essential. Experience of organising events, taking conference bookings, using Microsoft Office packages, liaising with health and social care professionals and working in a voluntary organisation are desirable.

For further information please write to Ruth Carlyle, MS Society, 25 Effie Road, Fulham, London SW6 1EE quoting SEA on the envelope. Closing date for applications is 29th May 1998.

Interviews will take place in the week of 15th June.

The MS Society is working to become an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from people with disabilities

Registered Charity 207495

Services and Education Assistant

Starting salary £16,000 (London-based)

Suffolk: St Peters view was designed for wheelchair users. Ideally situated for coast, country and market towns. 3 keys highly commended. Accessibility 2. Brochure Fax/Phone (01728) 685358.

SW France, cottage modified for the disabled. Sleeps up to 10, including two wheelchair users. Private pool with hoist, wheel-in shower, ramps etc. Fully equipped kitchen, or meals available. Shopping service. Beautiful area. See www.legrandbost.mcmill.com OR phone 01225 447515 for information. Last minute reductions.

B&B in a working water mill twixt the Mendips & the Levels. Six bedrooms inc. one Cat. 1 room with one double bed & one single bed - curtained for privacy. Pub opposite accessible. Breakfast served in room. Burcott Mill (2 Crown Comm.) Guest House, Burcott, Wells, Somerset BA5 1NJ. E-mail: BURCOTTMILLWELLS@compuserve.com

Continued on page 33



REMPLOY

Don't just make a change – make a difference Marketing Director

London

£ Competitive Package

Remploy exists to provide quality products and services to its customers whilst creating employment opportunities for people with a wide range of disabilities.

With a turnover of £160 million across a diverse range of business sectors, Remploy is a private limited company, sponsored by the government, which enjoys state-of-the-art manufacturing capacity and strong strategic alliances with a host of blue-chip organisations.

Having undergone a substantial period of change, it now wishes to increase the level of professional support within the organisation across the marketing (and sales) functions.

Reporting to the Chief Executive, this Board level position is a pivotal role in driving both strategic and implementational marketing issues across the company, acting as a central marketing resource for all business groups.

In addition, this key appointment will play a significant role in developing corporate growth strategies, looking at potential expansion and market segmentation.

For this role, you will be a consummate marketing professional with a depth of experience across both issues as well as sectors. Ideally, your background will encompass business-to-business marketing and consultancy, with proven project management skills and evidence of being an agent of change. Other technical requirements include responsibility for significant budgets and fiscal accountability as well as strong management skills.

Equally important are your personal qualities; phlegmatic in character, an excellent communicator at all levels and the ability to champion ideas, strategies and results through consensus are all requisite.

If you are looking for a role where you can make a genuine difference to people as well as performance, we would like to hear from you.

Please send your curriculum vitae to Kevin Dunbar at Michael Page Sales & Marketing, Savannah House, 11 Charles II Street, London SW1Y 4QZ, telephone 0171 831 2000 or fax 0171 839 8086. Please quote reference 384329.



Michael Page
SALES & MARKETING



Australia • China • France • Germany • Hong Kong • Italy • Netherlands • New Zealand • Singapore • Spain • UK • USA

Holidays

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details **C. Hodgson**. Tel (01924) 454300.

Discover rural France at AUBERGE DE LA TOUR

Enjoy being wined and dined in our 12th century farmhouse situated in the Loire Valley/Vendee area. Fully wheelchair accessible. Minibus available for excursions. Personal care available. Qualified English nurse proprietor. Generous discounts for small groups. For brochure contact Pat & John Bartlam, 40 Rue St Eloi, Courlay, 79440 Deux Sevres, France. Tel/Fax: (00.33)5.49.72.25.37. Mobile home for self-catering.

SCOTTISH BORDERS. Two delightful, superbly equipped fully heated stone-built cottages with open fires in peaceful surroundings with beautiful views. Both suitable for disabled and able-bodied people, one totally wheelchair accessible (disabled categories 2&3). Each STB graded 5 crowns/commended and sleep six adults. Lots for everyone to see and do. Private parking and gardens. Pets welcome. Tel/Fax (01450) 860678. <http://www.abouthscotland.co.uk/quince/cherry.html>

Sand and Sea – SOUTHPORT "Sandpipers" overlooks Southport's Marine lake/beaches. Trips to the Lake District, Blackpool, Alton Towers. Accessible holiday centre. 12 single rooms. 12 twin rooms. Help buttons. Indoor swimming pool. CTV. Bar. From £250 pw – food, full care/volunteer help included. Registered with Social Services. Most physical disabilities catered for. Brochure? Call: 0171-833 4579 ext 132.

ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL provides good access, specialist equipment in some rooms. All in a comfortable, friendly country house hotel set in several acres of natural grounds, nine miles from the ancient city of Norwich, offering excellent opportunities for exploring the countryside and coastline of East Anglia. Now taking Easter bookings. Ring 01508 489324

Have Fun, Fun, Fun! "Skylarks" – Nottingham Purpose-built holiday centre recently reopened in August after £1.6m refurbishment. 26 single en-suite, 5 twin rooms. Electric hoists. CTV. Hydro pool. Bar. Help buttons. Free trips/excursions. Nurses/volunteer support. Prices from £245 pw – including food/care. For brochure, please tel: 0171 833 4579 ext 132.

SMALL CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

A new Disability Controlled Community Enterprise

Applications are invited for two key posts within SCS, a new employment enterprise owned by disabled people and based in Harrow. We therefore wish to recruit people with personal experience of disability. The business will operate commercially and will give local disabled people opportunities leading to work or other related areas. It has been developed by a local consortium and will be managed by Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD) in its first three years.

Work Development Officer SO1 (P/T 19 hours). To develop and run an intermediate Work Agency employing disabled people.
Administrator Scale 4 (P/T 17.5 hours) to provide administrative services to SCS project staff.

The above posts could be combined for suitable candidates. SCS will be an equal opportunities employer offering positive action for disabled people. SCS is initially supported by Harrow Association of Disabled People, Harrow Community Trust, Midland Bank, Scope, Kodak, Glaxo and National Lottery Charities Board.

For an application form tel: 0181-427 5569 or fax: 0181-861 5528. Closing date 8 May 1998. Interviews 15 May 1998.



BRENT DEAF PEOPLE'S GROUP

Part-time Administration Assistant
Hours: 15 hours per week (5 days)
Salary: £11,937 plus LWA (pro rata)

BDPG is a group established in 1992, for Deaf/Deafened/Hard of Hearing in Brent. The aims are to provide help and support, information and exchange ideas, campaigning for better services, providing regular open meetings and working with other Deaf organisations.

A part-time Administration is required to help and run the administration work, and to provide administrative support to the Resource Worker.

The successful applicant will be:
• confident in ensuring routine tasks get carried out accurately and to strict deadlines
• able to use computer software (Microsoft applications)
• flexible in their approach to work
• willing to work as a responsible member of a small but busy team
• able to use sign language (CACDP Level 2 certificate or equivalent)

For an application form contact: Brent Deaf People's Group
The New Millennium Day Centre
1 Robson Avenue, Willesdon, London NW10 3SG

Please mark your envelop 'Administrator's post'

Voice: 0800-515 152 ask for 0181-830 2577
Minicom: 0181-830 2577
Fax: 0181-830 4377
or e-mail us on: BDPG@BTInternet.com
106350,2521@compuserve.com

Closing date: 31st May 1998
Interviews: 17th June 1998



ROCHDALE COUNCIL is striving to be an Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider

Rochdale Council is committed to increasing the numbers of disabled people it employs. We have gone beyond what the Disability Discrimination Act requires of us and are changing our policies and practice in a serious attempt to encourage disabled people to apply for, and be successful in getting jobs with the Council. We have already changed our application form to make it more user friendly and easier to fill in. We can also offer:

- job information and application forms in suitable formats such as large print, tape, braille and computer disc;
- information on jobs which doesn't ask for skills or qualifications that are not directly relevant to the job;
- a guarantee of an interview for any disabled person meeting the essential criteria of the person specification;
- a commitment to making reasonable adjustments to the work environment.

Advertisements for specific jobs regularly appear in Local Job Centres, Rochdale Observer Series of Newspapers and other relevant papers or you can get the Council's Weekly Jobs Bulletin sent to you for 3 months by ringing us now on

(01706) 865608 or Minicom (01706) 864404
(between 9 am and 4 pm Mon to Fri) - Quoting Job Ref 267



LIVING INDEPENDENTLY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE SCHEME

Wish to recruit two workers to the following posts:
Co-ordinator

Full time – 37 hours per week £18,008 - £19,763

To develop and run an exciting new project and organisation focusing specifically on Direct Payments and Independent Living. You will be responsible for working with disabled people taking up Direct Payments; overseeing the support services; liaison with statutory and voluntary organisations and general promotion of the organisation.

You will need to have knowledge and experience of independent living and disability issues and administering projects in the voluntary sector.

(Ref: LIGS1)

Support Services Worker

Part-time – 18.5 hours per week £5,382 - £5,641

To develop and run support services for Direct Payments users. In the first instance the focus will be on information and peer support with other services being developed as and when necessary. You will also assist the co-ordinator in the development of the organisation.

(Ref: LIGS2)

For an application pack, stating which post you are interested in, contact: Sharon Trotman, Gloucestershire Association for Disability, Stuart House, Butt Street, Minchinhampton, Stroud GL6 9JS. Tel: (01453) 885857.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 3rd June 1998.

Applications from disabled people are positively encouraged.

Recruitment

Mental Health Directorate

We currently have vacancies within the Directorate for Staff Nurses at both E and D Grade.



Staff Nurse - RMN - E Grade

£14,165 - £16,410 p.a.

Staff Nurse - RMN - D Grade

£12,385 - £14,165 p.a.

All posts attract a special hospital lead of £2,751 and a psychiatric lead of £425 p.a.

With the commitment to multi-disciplinary team working, Rampton Hospital has established an enviable reputation for the provision of psychiatric services to mentally disordered patients requiring treatment and care in conditions of high security.

Within the mental health directorate we can offer opportunities to gain experience in the areas of admission/assessment, intensive care, continuing care and rehabilitation/pre-discharge.

If you would like to develop your clinical skills within these areas of practice you will need to demonstrate a high level of commitment to the care and treatment of people with serious mental health problems. We require nurses who are highly motivated, flexible with excellent communication skills.

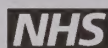
In return, you will enjoy ongoing personal development, career planning, clinical supervision and support. We have a progressive Training and Development Department which runs a wide selection of clinical and mandatory courses. It has established links with a number of universities, nationally and internationally. We have an active Nurse Research Department and nursing staff are actively encouraged to develop and participate in research programmes.

Rampton Hospital is looking to the future - we wish to influence the development of services for those with serious mental health problems. We are aiming to further enhance integrated mental health services, enabling patients in our care to receive the appropriate treatment for their onward progression to appropriate levels of care elsewhere.

For an informal discussion concerning the posts advertised, please contact either Brian Doolan, Clinical Nurse Manager or Martin Lyth, Clinical Nurse Manager on 01777 248321.

Information and application packs are available from Sharon Whetton, Human Resources Department, Rampton Hospital Authority, Retford, Notts, DN22 0PD, Telephone 01777 247775.

Closing date for completed applications forms is Friday 8th May 1998.



Applications are welcomed irrespective of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, creed/religion, colour, ethnic or national origin.



Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People

Independent Living Scheme Advisor
£14,796 - £16,815 (37 hours per week)

Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People works towards full rights and equality for all disabled people in society.

It manages an Independent Living Scheme (ILS) which offers information, training and support to disabled people who wish to use direct payments from social services to employ their own personal assistants. The ILS Advisor will work on a one-to-one basis with disabled people referred to the Scheme offering support in all aspects of recruiting and managing their own PAs.

The successful candidate must be committed to enabling disabled people to have choice and control over their own lives; have experience of information and advice work; be able to give advice on financial matters e.g. tax, NI, book keeping (training given); be prepared to learn about and operate computer software packages including the Payroll service; and be willing to contribute to the overall work of a lively campaigning organisation. The duties of the post require travel throughout Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

This position is open to disabled people only.

For a job applicant's pack (print, tape and braille available) please contact: Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People, Cowbridge Court, 60 Cowbridge Road West, Ely, Cardiff CF5 5BS. Tel: (01222) 255611.

Closing date for applications: 18 May 1998
Interviews - early June 1998.



WEST OF ENGLAND COALITION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

require a

Disabled Person for the post

PEER ADVOCACY PROJECT WORKER

Apt & C pt 30 - £18,066

35 hours per week
30 days annual leave
pension scheme

WECODP is a well established campaigning and community development organisation in a thriving disabled people's movement and voluntary sector.

The purpose of the Project is to facilitate the empowerment and self determination of young disabled people through using community development and youth work skills to establish links between young disabled people and disabled adults and to set up self-organised activities bringing together young disabled people.

We are committed toward equal opportunities and we particularly welcome applications from disabled people who experience simultaneous oppression.

For an application pack, phone Berni on 0117-942 0721 (voice & minicom) at The Yard, 6 Sommerville Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 9AA.

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 26th May 1998 - 12 noon
Interviews will be held on: Monday 8th June 1998

ALL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN BRAILLE, LARGE PRINT AND ON AUDIO TAPE OR COMPUTER DISK.

Working Together For Our Right To Equality

CO-ORDINATOR

Part-time (18 hours per week)

HBADP Scale PO1 point 33 £20,997 pro rata (incl. OLW)

Hounslow Borough Association of Disabled People is looking to recruit a part-time Co-ordinator who has the following skills/experiences:

- Ability to produce & implement a business plan for the Association
- Experience of fundraising
- Understanding of how Voluntary Organisations work
- Ability to manage a small team
- Understanding of local & national disability issues
- Experience of monitoring & evaluation mechanisms

Applications from disabled people are most welcome. The Voluntary Action Centre is wheelchair accessible.

For an application pack please contact HBADP at the Voluntary Action Centre, 12 School Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 1QZ.
Telephone: 0181-577 3226 ext 309/325, minicom: 0181-572 3923 or fax: 0181-570 5802.

Closing date for completed application forms is 5pm on Thursday 28th May 1998. Interviews will be held at the VAC on Tuesday 9th June 1998.

RICHMOND ADVICE AND INFORMATION ON DISABILITY

in partnership with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Richmond Independent Living (Direct Payments) Scheme Co-ordinator

Salary: £19,288 for 36 hours per week

RAID is contracted by the Local Authority to provide independent support for users of the Richmond Independent Living (Direct Payment) Scheme. Funding is initially over two years with an intention to develop the scheme over this period. The candidate will have direct personal experience of disability, a knowledge of current disability legislation, a commitment to Independent Living as a civil rights issue, the ability to encourage and motivate disabled individuals and to work with a group of disabled people. A part-time administrative assistant will be appointed to work with you.

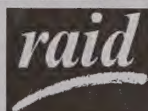
If you have the ability to take this scheme into the twenty first century making it attractive, exciting and relevant to disabled people, RAID would like to hear from you.

The successful candidate will be based with RAID which is an Equal Opportunities Employer and who offer an accessible working environment.

CLOSING DATE: 29 May 1998
Interviews will be held on 26 June 1998

Application forms available from: The Manager, RAID, The Annexe, Stanley Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 5PZ. Tel: 0181-893 4402

Registered Charity No. 1011697. Affiliated to DIAL UK.



COMMUNICATION WORKER

(Salary SO1 £17,481 - £18,636)

Adaip is a broad alliance of local and national disability advice and information providers, created to support and encourage the development of disability advice and information services to meet the needs of disabled people.

You must have a good understanding of the issues facing disabled people and information providers. We are looking for someone with the range of skills and experience needed to help organise training events and conferences, produce a newsletter and help develop the role of Adaip.

Preference will be given to applications from disabled people, and all disabled people who meet the essential criteria will be interviewed. We would welcome job share applications. The post will be based in accessible premises in Doncaster. This is a 1 year contract initially, but we expect there to be further funding.

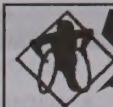
For pack and application form, contact: Mark Hall, Adaip, Park Lodge, St. Catherine's Hospital, Tickhill Road, Doncaster DN4 8QN. Tel/minicom: (use voice announcer) (01302) 570800, fax: (01302) 570801. Information can also be supplied on tape or disk, and in large print or braille if requested.

Closing date: 27 May 1998.

Interviews: 9 June 1998.

Deadlines for the June issue of Disability Now:
Booking deadline is 8 May - Copy deadline is 12 May

Holidays



WHEELING AROUND
THE ALGARVE
RONDANDO PELO
ALGARVE

Self Catering villas and cottages, hotels, B&B, car hire with hand controls, adapted vans, etc. Scuba Diving courses and other sporting and leisure facilities.
David Player, Wheeling Around The Algarve, Apartado 3421, 8136 Almancil, Portugal
Tel: 00 351 89 393636
Fax: 00 351 89 397448

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL

"Holiday Care Award Winners"

Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.

Please ring or write for colour brochure.

R&N Hall, Penrose Burden,
St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall
PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin
(01208) 850277 or 850617

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays

Devon/Cornwall border

Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including tea room/shop. Take-away meals and equipment hire available. Tourist Board Highly Commended.

For colour brochure please contact:
Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm,
Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF.
Phone: 01409 211509. Fax 01409 211510.

LLETY MIERI

LLANDEILO, WEST WALES

3 charming award-winning cottages, designed for wheelchair users and their families. Peaceful rural location overlooked by Dinffwr Castle. Each warm and well equipped cottage sleeps 4. Extensive grounds and games room. Open all year. Short breaks available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558 823 059) for brochure.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE

Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you.

Book now for 1998.

For more information tel: 0181 885 4971 evenings.

Workshops

EUTHANASIA, GENETIC SCREENING, 'LETTING PEOPLE DIE'

Presentations by Wolf Wolfensberger on 'Crafting a Coherent Ethical Stance on the Sanctity of All Human Life', Newcastle University, 13-17 July, £395 (non-residential).

Call Ruth Abrahams, tel: 0191-272 5505.

Persnal



A dating agency designed for people with disabilities and is open to discerning able bodied people.

Tel/Fax 01473 226950

Lonely, bored and fed up?
Why not give Handicate a try?
Handicate, The Wellington Centre,
52 Chevellier Street, Ipswich,
Suffolk IP1 2PB
Member of ABIA

Find a Friend

Find-A-Friend

Anybody - Any Age - Anywhere
Able-bodied or Disabled
Choose Your Own Ideal Relationship

MUTUAL ESSENTIAL LINKS

1 Weir Street, Northwich,
Cheshire CW9 5HL
Tel/Fax: (24 hrs) UK 01606 49093
Overseas +44 + 1606 49093

Services

Birkdale Paediatrics and Adult Neuro Clinic

I specialise in treating children and adults with neurological disorders.

BOBATH trained.

I use a combination of techniques that is appropriate to the requirements of the individual.

The aim is to build up awareness of one's own body and self, so that maximum benefit is obtained.
Birkdale Paediatrics and Adult Neuro Clinic
Farshideh Bondarenko
Dip Physio MCSP SRP
Tel: 0181-998 9403.

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.



Colour of life

If our gardening supplement has given you a taste for healthy living, why not get hold of a copy of this book?

Gordon Ramsay, restaurateur, and Amanda Ursell, nutritionist, have produced a beautiful 28-page book, highlighting the colourful benefits of fruit and vegetables, listing an A-Z of nutritional information and providing stunning, easy recipes.

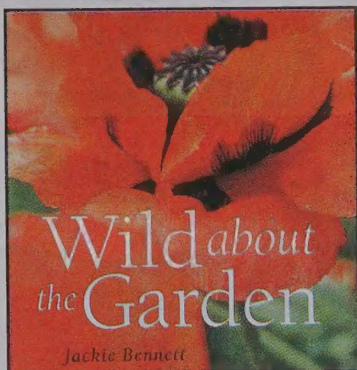
Disability Now has six copies of this colour-coded book to give away (entry details in blue box, below).

For further information about *Colours of Life*, write to PO Box 21, Godalming, Surrey GU7 2SS.

Nature's garden

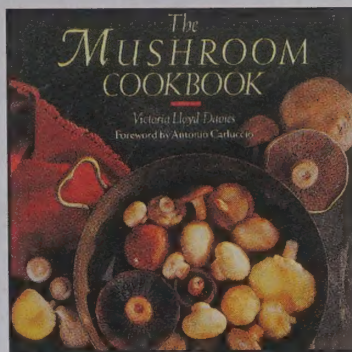
Written by Jackie Bennett, *Wild about the Garden* accompanies the Channel 4 tv series.

Thanks to Macmillan Publishers, DN has two copies, worth £18.99 each, to give away.



This beautifully illustrated book shows how to encourage natural gardening, is divided into six chapters such as woodland, meadow and wetland, and gives advice on habitat origins, planting, wildlife and practical projects for your garden.

Order from Macmillan (free p&p), tel: (01624) 675137.



Mushroom mania

Why not try cooking something a bit unusual? DN has 10 copies of the *Mushroom Cookbook*, worth £4.99, up for grabs.

The book contains 100 enticing recipes using cup, chestnut, oyster and shiitake mushrooms.

Specially devised by Victoria Lloyd-Davies, the recipes are easy to follow and prepare.

If you're not a lucky winner, you can order one at a special price of £3.99 (cheques to Mushroom Bureau) from Mushroom Bureau, 27 King Edward Walk, London SE1 7PR.

Sail away

The Ro-Ro Sailing Project is a registered charity which provides recreational facilities for disabled people.

If you fancy sailing the seas, the Project is offering two lucky winners (each with one guest) the chance to charter Verity K for two days (skipper provided), worth £80 per pair.

The trip is from 9am to 6pm the following day (subject to availability) and is self catering.

You will sail from Port Solent, near Portsmouth, probably stopping off at The Isle of Wight, if weather conditions permit.

Verity K is fully wheelchair accessible, with disabled facilities. A wheelchair user must be accompanied by a non-user.

Verity K is also available



Roll on roll off: The accessible Verity K

for charter, training and holidays throughout the year (tel: (01705) 254254).

All entries should be sent on a postcard directly to the Ro-Ro Sailing Project, 64 Hambledon Road, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 7UB.

Seeds of success



Unwins, the seed specialists, have given DN 24 seed tapes, worth £1.49 each, to give away. Four lucky winners will get a batch of six different vegetable seed tapes.

Each bio-degradable strip has seeds already embedded in it. You just place it on the soil, cover lightly, and then water.

For information on the Making Gardening Easier range, tel: (01945) 588522.



Nursery gardens

Here's something for your budding gardener.

Thanks to the Early Learning Centre, DN has six Gardens on a Plate (5 years and over) worth £3.99 each, and six Soft Stuff Gardens (4 years and over) worth £7.99 each to give away.

The first allows children to

design and create their perfect garden, on a plate, using a selection of craft materials.

The box of the other folds into a garden backdrop, and comes with extruder and moulds, to create a variety of garden designs.

For general enquiries/mail order catalogue, tel: 0990-352 352.

Send your name and address on a postcard marked Colours, Tape, Plate garden, Soft stuff, Mushroom or Wild, to DN, address on page 3. Closing date 28 May 1998. Offers are not open to DN staff or associates. UK entrants only.

What's in DN next month?



- **INVESTIGATION**
DN uncovers gaps in incontinence services.
- **CITY FOCUS**
Can Coventry cut it? We go and find out.
- **FASHION**
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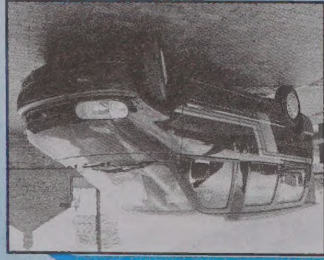
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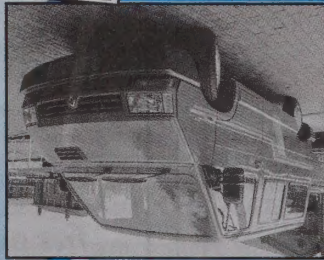
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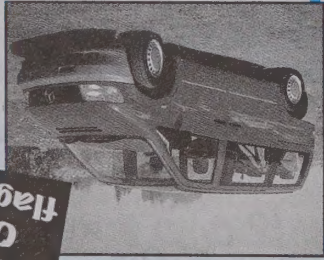
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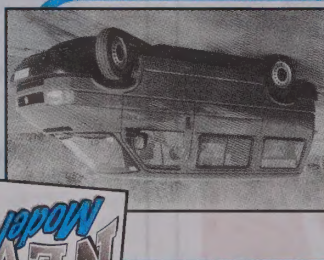
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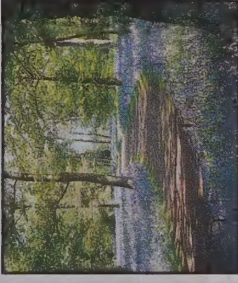
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LIFE AT THE FRONT

Is a new tv drama good
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Jobs
pages 31-34
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Class conflicts

Middle class children are benefiting from abuse of the special educational needs system. *See page 1*

Ball skills: Ex-Take That member Robbie Williams shows his other talents at a friendly charity football match, run by the Chelsea Disabled Football Club, last month.

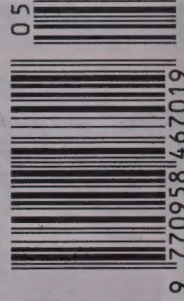


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